

THE PRESENCE AND OFFICE
OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT



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The Presence and Office of the Holy Spirit.

SIX ADDRESSES

GIVEN AT THE CHURCH OF
S. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, WILTON ROAD,
IN THE PARISH OF
S. PETER'S, EATON SQUARE,
MAY 16TH AND 17TH, 1878.

WITH
THREE SERMONS
PREACHED AT
S. PETER'S, EATON SQUARE.

BY THE RIGHT REV.
ALLAN BECHER WEBB, D.D.,
BISHOP OF GRAHAMSTOWN.



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TO THE
VICAR, CLERGY, AND FAITHFUL IN CHRIST JESUS,
OF THE CHURCH OF
S. PETER'S, EATON SQUARE,
THIS MEMORIAL OF TIMES OF REFRESHMENT
SPENT IN FELLOWSHIP WITH THEM
IS GRATEFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

*The profits of this work will be given to the
Cathedral Fund, Bloemfontein.*

PREFACE.

IN deference to the request of many, whose judgment and wishes I feel bound to consider, I venture to place these notes of my Addresses at the disposal of a larger number than those to whom they were first given.

They deal with a high and holy mystery, which is a great fact of our regenerate life, and has much to do with practical religion, in the Church and in the world.

It is obvious that, during those two "Quiet Days," I could only put forth—and that, very imperfectly—one side of the Truth, which, in a formal theological treatise, would have to be balanced by other parts of the Divine Revelation, whereby "the proportion of the Faith" is maintained.

It is, however, a side of GOD's Truth which, as it seems to me, is specially needed in the present day. "There are diversities of operations,"—in Nature, in Providence, in the Church, in the individual soul,—"but it is the same GOD which worketh all in all."

What we have to make clear to the mind and conscience of the age is this. “The Faith once for all delivered to the Saints,” when animated by the Living SPIRIT, secures the harmony of our religious belief and worship with the true progress of humanity, gives unity and proportion to our life, and provides for its *continuity*; so that we can begin here, in the Church Militant, on the same lines and principles, upon which we shall advance eternally, all through the life of deep Rest in Paradise, and that of boundless energy in the City of the Resurrection.

These thoughts will furnish the key-note of the Six Addresses. The connection of the Sermon on “the Anglican Principle” with this subject will, I believe, be plain:—the question between the Anglican Church and other bodies being really that of the Office and Function of GOD the HOLY GHOST in this dispensation. “That good thing which was committed unto thee *keep, by the Holy Ghost* which dwelleth in us.”

The Addresses were noted down by some who heard them delivered, and to whom I really owe the preservation of what was then spoken. They are naturally somewhat rugged in form, and colloquial in style: but if they prove of any service to those who are trying to follow the Saints of GOD in “the Kingdom and patience of JESUS CHRIST,” they will have done a good work.

They do not claim originality, though I do not know how far I may be indebted to others for any particular thoughts or suggestions.

A friend has kindly undertaken to revise the notes and prepare them for the press ; and as I am on the point of returning to my Diocese, I very thankfully leave them in his hands, commending them to the Blessing of GOD.

Feast of the Epiphany, 1879.

NOTE TO SECOND EDITION.

I AM indebted to others, for the preparation of this Second Edition, to which I have only been able to give a hurried and partial revision, myself.

The two Sermons now added—on the Life of the Blessed in Paradise, and after the Resurrection—are obviously connected with the subject of the Sixth Address.

ALLAN B. BLOEMFONTEIN.

Lent, 1881.

NOTE TO FOURTH EDITION.

I HAVE to acknowledge, with great humility and thankfulness, the blessing that has been allowed to rest on this little book, through the power of the HOLY GHOST. It has helped not a few, it seems, in its present form, who might not have been touched by more finished discourses.

I have therefore decided, after reading through it carefully, to send it forth again to such as will receive its message, with hardly any alterations ; commanding it once more to the Blessing of our LORD and of His SPIRIT.

ALLAN B. GRAHAMSTOWN.

August, 1883.

CONTENTS.

Part I.

SIX ADDRESSES ON THE PRESENCE AND OFFICE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

	PAGE
I. GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT, IN CREATION ...	1
II. GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT, IN PROVIDENCE ...	19
III. GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT, IN THE CHURCH ...	35
IV. GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE REGENERATOR OF THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL	57
V. GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE RENEWER OF THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL	73
VI. GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE PERFECTER OF THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL	90

Part II.

THREE SERMONS.

I. THE LIFE OF THE BLESSED, IN PARADISE ...	112
II. THE LIFE OF THE BLESSED, AFTER THE RESURREC- TION	140
III. THE ANGLICAN PRINCIPLE ESSENTIALLY HIS- TORICAL	161



ADDRESS I.

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT, IN CREATION.

YOUR Vicar sets these two days before you, as days of spiritual retirement and quiet thought. You do not come here, in order to have new truths brought before you, or even to hear old truths put forth in strange ways ; that is not the purpose for which the "Quiet Days" are set apart. Any such effort would only divert the mind from the true blessings which we ought to expect. You come here, simply to have those old truths deepened in you ; to bring yourself face to face with them, quietly ; to place yourself under the influence of the old truths in the ancient Creeds,—especially this : "I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY GHOST."

Consider then, as our starting-point, what it is to "believe in the HOLY GHOST ;"—what our Blessed LORD and His Church lead us to expect, from contact with the HOLY GHOST ; what He is

ready to give you, during these Quiet Days,—if only you will let Him deal with you in whatever way He may desire,—to mould, fashion, and strengthen you for the work which GOD, in His Providence, shall set before you.

These Quiet Days, then, are given to you, that you may specially place yourself in the Presence of the HOLY GHOST,—under the overshadowing Power of that Living Person. Aim at this. Ask Him to help you, in deed and in truth, to believe—more than you have done hitherto—in the special Blessing of the New Covenant.¹

I will simply give you six heads for thought,—three to-day, and three to-morrow,—as divisions under which you can afterwards arrange, in your own meditations, those parts of the Bible which relate to GOD the HOLY SPIRIT, and the revelation of His Work. You will have to take your Bibles, and try to see, in a connected order, what GOD the HOLY GHOST says about Himself. Follow my line of thought,—or rather, that which GOD the HOLY GHOST Himself may suggest to you. He is your Guide ; He will bring to your remembrance those thoughts which He may intend you

¹ Jer. xxxi. 31-34. Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. Acts ii. 16-18, 33.
1 Cor. xii. 13.

to follow out for yourselves. Look upon Him as your Friend ; commit your soul to His guidance, and follow where He leads.

My own suggestions and counsels must necessarily be very scattered, very fragmentary. I can only place them for you under these six heads :—

1. GOD the HOLY SPIRIT, in Creation :—in His relation to the Old Creation,—to Nature.
2. GOD the HOLY SPIRIT, in Providence.
3. GOD the HOLY SPIRIT, in the Church ; as the Soul, the Life, of the Mystical Body of CHRIST.
4. GOD the HOLY SPIRIT, *regenerating* the individual soul ; as the Author and the Power of the new Life, in the individual soul.
5. GOD the HOLY SPIRIT, *renewing* the individual soul ;—renovating, disciplining, training it.
6. GOD the HOLY SPIRIT, *perfecting* the individual soul.

To-day, we think of Him in the larger sphere of His activity,—the larger circle of His operations ; in Creation, in Providence, and in the Church. To-morrow, we narrow it down to ourselves ; to that work which the HOLY SPIRIT proposes to do for you individually, if you will let Him have His own way with you. And on Sunday next, I propose to speak of the HOLY GHOST as the

Power in which we keep "the Faith once delivered to the Saints," which is the office of the Church.

There are three Prayers that I would suggest to you, as expressing the attitude of mind in which you should place yourselves in the overshadowing Presence of the HOLY SPIRIT, during these Quiet Days.

(1.) The listening attitude, expressed in the prayer of Samuel: "Speak, LORD, for thy servant heareth."

(2.) The surrender of the heart to the action of GOD the HOLY GHOST, expressed by the response of the Blessed Virgin: "Behold the handmaid of the LORD; be it unto me according to Thy Word."

(3.) The offer of responsive energy,—of active employment of those faculties of yours, which GOD the HOLY SPIRIT has bestowed, and which He can strengthen,—expressed in the enquiry of S. Paul: "What wilt Thou have me to do?"

Speak to the HOLY SPIRIT. Offer your devotion to GOD the HOLY GHOST, at the feet of Him Who "hath the Seven Spirits of GOD." Say to Him, "*Speak, Lord;*" and expect an answer.

It may come, perhaps, through some word of Holy Scripture.

Be willing to let Him have His own way with you. "*Behold the handmaid of the Lord!*" Say that word courageously! Do not be afraid that you are venturing too far. Do not be afraid lest the HOLY SPIRIT should say *too much* to you, or ask you to give up something that you are not prepared to give up. He is "*the Comforter*,"—the Spirit of Strength; whatever He tells you to do, He will give you courage and joy and strength to do.

And of course, after these days of quiet, you may be led on to some further activity for CHRIST and His Church; He may ask of you some new effort. Therefore say with S. Paul: "*Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?*"

Remember, you have to deal with the HOLY SPIRIT Himself; not merely with any human being; not simply with any words of mine!

This, then, is our subject this morning:—GOD the HOLY GHOST, in CREATION; the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD, in His relation to the Old Creation, as the LORD and Life-giver.

What is the relation of the spiritual man to the

Old Creation of GOD,—to Nature,—to natural gifts and enjoyments?

This, in many ways, is a very practical question. You want the answer, for your own daily life. You need the presence and help of “the SPIRIT of Counsel.” Some of the most difficult questions of practical life are those which concern our relation to natural duties, natural affections, and so on. We must therefore try, first of all, to master and apprehend the fact of the HOLY SPIRIT “brooding over” the Old Creation of GOD, as the LORD and Life-giver. This will help us very much, afterwards.

I am speaking now of “the Old Creation,” as distinct from that New Creation, in CHRIST, through union with the Humanity of our LORD, in the Body of CHRIST, whereby CHRIST is formed *in us.*¹

The operation of the Three Persons of the Blessed TRINITY in the work of the Old Creation, seems to be indicated in this manner. The FATHER’s glory is revealed to us—the Thought of GOD is uttered—by the SON, Who is “the WORD.” It is the SON, Who gives the *forms* to Creation. And it is the HOLY SPIRIT Who develops them, and fills them with life and beauty.

¹ 2 Cor. v. 17. Gal. iv. 19. Eph. ii. 10.

He works, in Nature, after a pattern ; and that Pattern is CHRIST, the great Archetype, "the Beginning of the Creation of GOD."¹ The HOLY SPIRIT has set this before Himself, as it were ; to realize the Thought of GOD ; to work out CHRIST, in detail ; to manifest the glory and the beauty of CHRIST, in the visible Creation.

Thus, the outward and visible world is, in a very real way, a Revelation of CHRIST. The Heavens declare His glory.²

Throughout Scripture, the HOLY SPIRIT is revealed to us as the LORD and Life-giver, Whose energy and interest are actively occupied in the Old Creation.

Let me briefly give a few instances.

GOD the HOLY SPIRIT is manifested, in the Old Testament, "as brooding over the face of the waters ;" developing the germs of life : and again, after the Flood, as renewing the face of the earth.³ He is revealed as giving skill and understanding to Bezaleel, the architect of the tabernacle.⁴ We see Him, as the Spirit of Life, giving strength to the physical nature of Samson ; when "the SPIRIT of

¹ Rev. iii. 14. Col. i. 15.

² Ps. xix. 1.

³ Gen. i. 2 ; ii. 7 ; viii. ix. Job xxvi. 13 ; xxxiii. 4. Ps. xxxiii. 6 ; civ. 30.

⁴ Ex. xxxvi. 1.

the LORD came upon him," he did great things, as the champion of Israel.¹ He also instructs the "husbandman ; "² He teaches all the practical arts and sciences of life.

The physical gifts of the body manifestly come from Him ; and also the intellectual gifts of the mind.

In the New Testament, He is revealed to us, in a special way, as "preparing"³ the Human Body of CHRIST,—in the wondrous Incarnation. When GOD the SON "took Man's Nature, in the womb of the Blessed Virgin," it was "by the operation of the HOLY GHOST." He was "conceived by the HOLY GHOST."⁴ He "was Incarnate by the HOLY GHOST of the Virgin Mary, and was made Man."

And then,—to give one more instance:—the operation of the HOLY GHOST in the physical Creation, as LORD and Life-giver, is manifested in the Resurrection of the Body. In that physical Body of CHRIST which He had Himself "prepared," He worked out the Resurrection : and hereafter, "He that raised up CHRIST from the dead shall also quicken *your* mortal bodies, by His SPIRIT that dwelleth in you."⁵

¹ Judges xiii. 25 ; xiv. 19. ² Is. xxviii. 26. ³ Heb. x. 5.

⁴ S. Matt. i. 18-25. S. Luke i. 35. ⁵ Rom. i. 3, 4 ; viii. 11.

Thus, from the beginning of the Old Creation down to the very end of the fulfilment of GOD's great plan, we find the HOLY SPIRIT interesting and occupying Himself, not only with the spiritual life of man, but also with his physical and external life,—with what we call his “natural” gifts; so that, in one sense, these also are “spiritual.” And this He does, with each of us, individually.

Look then along the stream of Time, and you will see the HOLY SPIRIT throughout, “brooding” over the Old Creation. It does not, for one moment, fall out of His Hands.

All through the Bible, we find His Presence *symbolised* :—not indeed as incarnate, yet in sacramental forms, His Coming is typified and signified. We see Him coming, in the overshadowing “Cloud,” and in the “Dew” of Heaven ;¹ in the form of a “Dove ;” in the human “Breath” of the LORD JESUS CHRIST ; in the “Tongues” of Fire, and in the rushing mighty “Wind.”² And later on, He is symbolically revealed to us, not only in the “Seven Lamps of Fire, burning before the

¹ Ex. xl. 34-38. ² Chron. v. 14. S. Matt. xvii. 5. Hosea xiv. 5.

² S. Matt. iii. 16. S. John xx. 22. Acts ii. 2; iv. 31. Ezek. xxxvii. 9, 10.

Throne," but also in the "pure River of Water of Life, proceeding out of the Throne of GOD and of the Lamb."¹

You see then, that although it was not in the order of the plan of the Eternal TRINITY, that the HOLY SPIRIT should become Incarnate, yet there may indeed be outward and visible *signs* of His nearness. And, as the result, I want you to lay hold of this truth, which the Church has set forth by affirmation, as the theological basis of much practical action :—*there is no essential antithesis—no necessary antagonism—between the spiritual and the natural.* Let this one truth be firmly fixed in your minds, and it will help you against erroneous opinions, on the one side and on the other.

We are always setting up an antagonism which GOD has not set up, between the natural and the spiritual,—between the earthly and the heavenly,—between Nature and GOD. We must of course hold fast—and the Church always does hold it fast, theologically,—the *distinctness* of the "natural" and the "spiritual," or we fall into Pantheism. (There is a great deal of Pantheistic thought, in the present day.) The natural is not "another mode" of the spiritual ; nor is the spiritual so "blended

¹ Rev. iv. 5 ; xxii. 1.

with the natural," as to lose its distinctness. But there is no antagonism ; there must be a joining together of the two ; and we have need continually to remember that "what GOD hath joined together," man has no right to "put asunder."

This thought, as before said, is the real theological basis of much that is practical. Let this foundation be well laid at the beginning, and you will find that it will help you, practically, as a protection of Truth, and a safeguard from various forms of error. I am unwilling even to hint at controversy, but it is necessary, for the sake of clearness.

1. It will be a safeguard against all *Anti-Sacramental* theories.

The mind of man has conceived that the most "spiritual" method of communing with God must be through the spirit alone ; by the direct contact of spirit with spirit. On the contrary, it has always been GOD's way, that the HOLY SPIRIT should act directly upon the *whole* nature of man, through the two-fold Nature—Divine and Human—of CHRIST, "the WORD, made Flesh." And if, as we have seen, the Holy Scriptures disclose the operation of the HOLY SPIRIT as being always at work upon the

outward and visible Creation, it surely ought not to seem foreign to the Divine mode of procedure, that He should act upon us *sacramentally*,—through the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments, in the Church of GOD.

This Anti-Sacramental theory ends in Deism ; in the renouncing of the Mediator.

2. On the other hand, there is that *Roman* idea of "Perfection" which seems to issue in the annihilation of Nature, instead of in its transformation. This comes out in some of their Sacramental formula about the action of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT. Instead of interpenetrating, transfiguring, glorifying the Old Creation, they would kill it outright ! To break and annihilate the natural, instead of associating it with the Divine and Supernatural ;—to become as *un-earthly*, as *un-natural*, as possible, —this is thought to be the highest aim and ideal ; whereas the perfection of saintly life is to be really and truly *natural*. Nature is not antagonistic to CHRIST : though under the curse, in one sense, yet she is redeemed from the curse by CHRIST, and is to be claimed for CHRIST.

You will observe these wrong ideas of Perfection running all through the Roman Theology, as well as through the Anti-Sacramental system.

The Roman error, on the one side, and the Anti-Sacramental theories, on the other, seem alike to spring from an incomplete apprehension of the relation of GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT to the Old Creation of GOD. It is, in fact, Manichæism, in one form or the other.

This comes out in practical ways: for instance, in the question of fasting before Holy Communion. Though a pious custom, and very right to be observed by the far larger number of people, yet it must not so be put before them, as to make the contrary custom appear a *sin*,—a “defiling” of the Heavenly Gift; for we may “receive with thanksgiving” the food which has been “sanctified by the Word of GOD and Prayer.”¹

You see how very practically and deeply the right holding of this Truth concerning the HOLY SPIRIT reaches into our spiritual life. It is well, therefore, that we should try to apprehend it clearly. The Old Creation is to be redeemed, not annihilated; to be transfigured and glorified, not treated as if it had been made by mistake, or introduced by some lower and inferior Deity! In one shape or another, this error appears in all Church History.

¹ 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5.

And then, there is another tendency, against which we must be especially watchful. In these days of religion,—of much outward religious worship and observance,—there is some danger lest “religion” should be taken up by the *women*, and the “natural” world left to the *men*. There is danger lest we should have,—as in France,—the religious duties performed by the women, as if that were *their* business, and the interests of natural life taken up by the man, as if that were *theirs*!

The way to avoid this danger is to remember that natural life ought to be dealt with *reverently*, because GOD’S HOLY SPIRIT has to do with it. We must not treat as sinful, that which is right and innocent. We must not call it “secular” and “worldly;” it must have our sympathy and reverence. This thought will preserve those who have to attend to these things as duties, from looking at “religion” as something set apart for Sunday,—something which belongs to another world, but which has very little to do with every-day life, in this world.

Let us then try really to apprehend GOD’S purpose, with regard to the Old Creation. It is

not to be annihilated, but subordinated,—brought into “captivity.” CHRIST must reign over all, and pour His SPIRIT from on High upon all. What we have to learn, therefore, is *proportion* ;—the finding for everything its relative place and fitness, in the Kingdom of GOD. How much of your life should be taken up by religious duties, or other duties, is a matter for counsel ; but a general harmony should exist between the natural side of your life, and the spiritual, leaving neither side undeveloped. This will come from a true view of the HOLY SPIRIT’s work in Creation, and of the work which He has to do in *us* : taking of the glory of CHRIST, which He has poured out in Creation, and shewing it unto us ; revealing to us something of the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

We have to be so much on our guard in these days, against that divorce between the “religious” and the “secular” life, which is one of the greatest dangers of the Church. See to the true *centre* of your life ; its *unity* first, and then its *proportion*.

And now,—to end with a devotional thought :—What should be the result of our meditation on this Truth ? What should be the practical out-come



of the contemplation of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT, operating in Creation ?

The practical lesson is this : the duty and grace of *Recollectedness* ; because, remember, every living thing around us,—every child we meet, every flower we see, every blade of grass, —is a “Sacrament,”—an outward and visible sign of the nearness of GOD the HOLY GHOST. Why is that flower a *living* flower ? Because He has been brooding over it. It would not be alive, without Him. How did it come out thus, in colour and beauty ? GOD the HOLY GHOST has been there, so fashioning and painting it. How is it that you are alive,—able to use your mind, and to bend your knees ? Why is that arm so strong ? Because He is over you, as the Giver of Life, giving to you, moment by moment, your breath, your strength, your life. We are living and moving under the overshadowing wings of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT.

Each blade of grass is a sign that the HOLY SPIRIT is near,—that He is personally present ; not as in the New Creation, but as the Lord and Life-giver of the Old Creation.

Strive then for this spirit of Recollectedness, because of the nearness of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT. He is so near, that He is the Giver of all Life,

within us and around ; the Source of all our strength, the Spring of all our movements. Wherever we go,—in the street, in the field, in our own garden,—He is near, in personal Presence, brooding over us ; the Hand of GOD is upon us. We cannot get away from Him, because we cannot get away from Life. “Whither shall I go from Thy SPIRIT ?—If I take the wings of the morning, and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there also shall Thy Hand lead me, and Thy Right Hand shall hold me.”¹ Try to gain this sense of the sacredness of the world because of the Sacramental Presence of GOD the HOLY GHOST.

And use this Prayer,—let it be the prayer of these Quiet Days :—“O HOLY SPIRIT, Who art present, as the Lord and Life-giver, everywhere, all around me, very near to me,—O how near !—all around me,—rest upon me as the Spirit of glory and of GOD ; as the Spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Teach me to know the things that are freely given to me of GOD ; teach me to say that JESUS is the LORD.”

This is the special thought that we have to recognise, in all Creation,—the Lordship of CHRIST.

¹ Ps. cxxxix. 7.

And "no man can say that JESUS is the LORD, but by the HOLY GHOST."

[I would suggest to you, at the close of this Meditation, to use Psalm cxlii., in private devotion.]

ADDRESS II.

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT, IN PROVIDENCE.

I AM taking for granted that the attitude of your mind is that of the three prayers which I gave you :

“ Speak, LORD, for Thy servant heareth.”

“ Behold the handmaid of the LORD ; be it unto me according to Thy Word.”

‘ LORD, what wilt Thou have me to do ? ’

You are placing yourself in the personal Presence of Him Who is the Spirit of revelation, illumination and inspiration ; and also of practical guidance and strength.

We saw Him, this morning, guiding and influencing Nature. We must now see how He reveals Himself to us as presiding over that order of the visible Creation which we call Providence.

In one sense, inasmuch as CHRIST is the King

over all the world, the HOLY SPIRIT presides over Providence as His Minister. He so assumes the relation of Ministering Spirit, as to bring out and gather all things around the great mystery of the Incarnation.

What I want you to realise is this fact: that when you go forth, after these Meditations, into the world—the world of Nature, and of Society, you are still under the overshadowing wings of GOD the HOLY GHOST; you “abide under the shadow of the Almighty.”¹

The question, hitherto, has been that of the relation of the spiritual man to the natural world,—to the world of Nature. We now come to the relation of the spiritual man, within the Body of CHRIST, to the world of Providence,—the world of Society, wherein he moves, and over which GOD the HOLY GHOST broods,—the whole Gentile world as well as the Israel of GOD.

All social questions come in here—under the light of this Truth.

Having first been brought into Sacramental union with the Incarnate Head of the Church, in the mystical Body of CHRIST, you are still to look for the Presence of GOD the HOLY GHOST,—His

¹ Ps. xci. 1, 4.

sanctifying, controlling, protecting influence, in the world around. Whatever the outward circumstances of your life, you are under the protection of GOD the HOLY GHOST.

He presides over Providence. You see this, in all Scripture history,—even if you do not go further than the Bible itself; and it gives the key to all “secular” history, likewise. Lay hold of this truth; observe how the HOLY SPIRIT *inspires* Providence. While He gives to men their free-will, their entire liberty, He so inspires the world,—the political world, the social world,—that it is made to minister unto and bring out the Glory of CHRIST in His Church. The kingdoms of this world are subordinated to Providence by the SPIRIT of CHRIST, acting in the world,—upon the world and upon Humanity, while yet leaving to the will of man entire freedom.

Consider, for instance, how the genius of the Greek and Roman peoples served to work out the purposes of GOD.

The Greek language was prepared, by various influences and various circumstances, in the course of many years, as the instrument which was to bear the burden of the Revelation of the Incarnation. This great factor of influence was no doubt

formed—"brooded over"—by the HOLY GHOST. He is the Spirit of Tongues ; symbolised by the "tongues as of fire," poured down at Pentecost upon the Apostles ; and then, as a visible sign to the world, they "began to speak with other tongues."¹ We know no other language so flexible as the Greek ; so wondrously adapted to become the vehicle of the Revelation of GOD Incarnate. And at the time of our LORD's Incarnation, it was so greatly modified and extended, by the combined influences of Greece and Rome, as to be the best conceivable medium whereby the Light should be manifested before the world. This illustrates the operation of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT in Providence, directing everything to the purposes of the Revelation of GOD.

Other instances may be given, to shew how GOD the HOLY SPIRIT presides over what seem to us the "natural" forces of the world,—its social and political forces. You will see, if you look through the various books of the Bible, how He prepared men, individually, amid all the natural circumstances of life, for their appointed work.

Cyrus, for instance, was "anointed" by GOD, to

¹ Acts ii. 3, 4. 1 Cor. xiv. 22.

bring again the captivity of the Israelites. Many years before he was born, it was said of him by the LORD : " He is My shepherd, and shall perform all My pleasure." Cyrus, a heathen and a Gentile, was elected, long before he came into the world, to minister to the purposes of GOD concerning His Church. And when the time appointed had come, Ezra says of him, that "the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus."¹

And even in those Books of the Bible that seem most without GOD,—such as the Book of Esther, in which the Name of GOD is not once mentioned,—we observe that the world is not left to its own natural course, and will, and fancies ; there is a Divine purpose running through it all. In the Book of Esther, we see people influenced by human motives, and there is no special reference to GOD's working ; yet even there, in the court of the Gentile king, under mere human conditions of life, where the whole aspect of things looked so entirely natural and earthly, we see the directing influence of the HOLY SPIRIT. Esther was raised up, in that time, and in that place, because she had her own special work to do in the Kingdom of GOD.

¹ Is. xliv. 28 ; xlv. 1-7. Ezra i. 1, 2 ; vi. 14.

Or again, look at individual men such as Bezaleel and Aholiab, the workers for the Tabernacle. They were "filled with the SPIRIT of GOD," to weave the tapestry, and "to devise curious works," for the service of the Sanctuary. All was arranged by the HOLY SPIRIT.¹ Moses and his companions were doing their work, by the SPIRIT of GOD ; and yet, to the world, at that time, all looked merely earthly and natural.

Think of the Prophets, and of the Judges ; how "the SPIRIT of GOD" took possession of this or that person, and "the Fire of GOD" came down upon Ezekiel or Jeremiah. Think how he adapted, moulded, prepared, for His own purposes, the constitutions and temperaments of men. S. Paul knew not what the Lord was doing with him, when he was being educated at Tarsus ; but the HOLY SPIRIT knew what He was doing, and what He would do with the instrument which was thus being fashioned by all the civilisation of Greece and of Rome.

Thus we see that all things,—not only the history of individuals, but such matters as the various characteristics, and features, and language, of different peoples, the time and place of indi-

¹ Exod. xxxv. 30-35. Heb. ix.

vidual lives,—all were brought into order and place, to bring out the great harmony which should swell around the cradle of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. The whole world was working together, to prepare a place where He should be born. The world was being prepared for JESUS CHRIST, “the Desire of all nations,” to walk up and down in it, when the fulness of the time should have come. Though the HOLY SPIRIT seems to act like the wind,—coming and going, we cannot tell how,—yet He has always a definite aim.

I put all this before you, that you may learn to *respect* the world,—though not, of course, that which is animal and sensual in the world, directly antagonistic to the Truth, and to the Will of GOD ; —that you may learn really to apprehend that GOD’s great purposes are being worked out in the world. All the forces of the world are doing their part, for the furtherance of the Kingdom of GOD. They are all made to minister to the great Mystery of “GOD manifest in the Flesh.”

Therefore, look on the world with great respect. It is, in one sense, a great Sacrament of GOD.

If you do this, you will find it easier to live a life of nearness to GOD. For when you step out of the special sphere of His operations in the Sacraments,

you do not enter a world wherein He has ceased to operate. He is working there in another way, though not with the same nearness and closeness of union as in the Body of CHRIST. The world outside is by no means left to chance, or to the will of man, or to the Evil One. "All things serve Thee." All the range of the "servants" of GOD, within and without the Church, are acting under His control.¹

We look out upon society, upon politics, upon the various motives that seem to be fashioning the present tempers of men upon the pattern of this world; all looks so natural, so human, so dependent upon mere outward things, such as newspaper writers can understand and gauge. The world seems to be entirely swayed by motives and impulses of its own, such as it can thoroughly understand, and could thoroughly explain. And yet, beneath it all, if He were but visible, we should behold GOD the HOLY SPIRIT, touching the springs of human action, influencing the wills and purposes of men, lifting them on to the next move—the next act—in the world's history. We are really looking out upon a piece of *Divine* history; the forces which direct it are preparing

¹ Ps. cxix. 91. Is. x. 5-15. Jer. xxv. 9.

the way for the Kingdom of CHRIST. The world is being prepared for "the Revelation of JESUS CHRIST," for the Coming of the King.¹

This Divine view of Providence, as presided over by the HOLY SPIRIT, will give you a Divine view of life ; it will enable you to see how far the harmony of life really reaches.

The great trial, of course, to you and to me, is that we seem to be doing so little for GOD ; it may seem as if the world and the Church would be almost better without us. Everything looks so common, so little, so human, so ordinary, so dusty, round about us ; so far away from Heaven ! There is nothing Divine about us or around us ; all is "of the earth, earthy."

But if, in this way, you look along the page of history, as lighted up by GOD's Word, you see how the HOLY SPIRIT presides over outward circumstances, and takes individuals by the hand to play their part. And then you will see that He has some work for you to do likewise, which shall stretch out into far limits. When you speak a word, or do a deed, you know not how far it will go,—how it will vibrate to the further end of the Divine organism. If a note is out of tune, it will

¹ S. Peter i. 5, 7, 13.

reverberate painfully; it will spoil the whole harmony.

He is the Author of our various gifts; playing, like a great Master, upon the various instruments with which He has to deal: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Moses, the sweet Psalmist of Israel,—each has his own tone of distinct utterance. The HOLY SPIRIT is the Musician, drawing out strains from each heart, to swell the melody “of Moses and of the Lamb.” One presents one strain, and another presents another. Because your special part does not sound exactly like that of some saint or ideal person, whom you revere, you must not suppose that you are not wanted, to furnish some part of the harmony in the great orchestra.

You are yourself; none of you are like your fellows. And you are what you are, by GOD’s arrangement,—because you have a certain part to play in GOD’s Providence, in the history of the world, and the development of the Body of CHRIST. GOD the HOLY GHOST is brooding over you, as the great Musician. He can bring out the music that is wanted. He can enable you to furnish some strain that would be lacking in the ears of GOD, if you did not bring it,—if you did not strike your string, nor touch your key.

The HOLY SPIRIT, as before said, is the Author of all the various gifts of humanity ; of such gifts as David and Jeremiah had, or the physical strength of Samson, or artistic taste, or eloquence, or whatever it may be. He is the Giver of all gifts. He gives them to us, because He wants us to "minister" therewith ;¹ He wants to consecrate us to Himself as "Priests" in the Church of GOD, and so to bring our gift to the Altar.

He "divideth to every man severally as He will." You have what you have, because GOD (?) the HOLY SPIRIT wills you to have it. You have not other gifts, because He does not see fit to give them to you. They would spoil some other gift which you have. You cannot have everything ! You have what you have, because, in the plan of GOD's Providence, there is a certain work for you to do, as part of the great whole. The HOLY SPIRIT knows the Mind of GOD about the whole plan, and how to fit you into it ; the picture would be imperfect, without you.

Now, if this is a true view of Providence,—of the whole ordering of the world according to the purposes of GOD,—it does not matter what we are, as to outward circumstances. Anna was

¹ 1 S. Peter iv. 10, 11.

preserved to old age, to give thanks for the LORD's Coming ; Simeon was kept alive, to see the Salvation of the LORD, and sing the "Nunc Dimittis ;" and Elisabeth was kept barren for a long period of her life, in order to bear her witness for the LORD in a different way from either. Each string in the great orchestra is under the finger of GOD the HOLY GHOST, Who touches the chord and brings out the tone that is wanted, at the right time. All is being fitted in together, whether in "profane" or ecclesiastical history. There is Cornelius the Centurion, as well as Zacharias the Priest. There is a place for each, though there are different degrees of privilege.

Try to trace for yourselves the indications of the HOLY SPIRIT's Presence, presiding over Providence ; the Bible is full of this truth. Take the Book of Esther, or the Psalmist's view of the meaning of Israel in Egypt ; or any other example to which you are drawn. And then, bring out of it the great truth of the Divine origin and purpose of your own position, your own gifts, your own work, in the world.

This will shew you, again, His tender, wonderful Patience. Think of His Patience with the world ! The HOLY SPIRIT was striving with men, even

before the Flood; ready to help them, in spite of all their deadness towards His Love, and all manner of resistance to His holy gifts. What a great view this gives of His Patience!

Think of His Patience with *us*! He might bring out such harmonies from us, and we compel Him to hear such discords!

This thought will help *you* to be patient, though all seem in disorder. Be patient; do not try to set the world right, in five minutes. You cannot do it; GOD did not intend you to do it. And do not be out of patience, if your own piece of the world is not in order. You have a great ideal of what it ought to be,—what it might be; but you have to be patient under this discipline, even as GOD is patient.

Then again, this helps us to be *content*. For Who is it, that gives us what we have, and keeps back from us what we have not? We are under “the Law of the SPIRIT of LIFE,”—the generous, princely SPIRIT of GOD. Your neighbour may have what you have not, and you may have what he has not, because “all these worketh that One and the self-same SPIRIT, dividing to every man severally as He will.”¹

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 11.

This thought will help us against envy and jealousy. It is not by chance, or from capricious favour, that He has withheld from us any good gift which He has given to others.

This thought helps up also against vanity and pride, if we have what others have not. "What hast thou, that thou didst not receive?"¹ From Whom did you receive it? And if you received it, is any credit due to you? Or was it given to you, as one of a Body; because GOD the HOLY SPIRIT wants you to play your part with it, somewhere? Your spirit of silence and retirement, and prayer; or your social influence; or simply the being still and bearing pain,—all is wanted, in the great Providence of GOD. All is part of one great plan, to further the counsel of GOD. All is arranged by Him. Each has some gift; the HOLY SPIRIT can teach you what are the special gifts that He has given to *you*, and desires to develop in *you*,—to bring out through you.

This consideration may help you also to a happier view than you might otherwise have, with regard to the world outside the Church. I shall have to speak, presently, of what GOD has done in the Church. But has He left the *nations* uncared

¹ 1 Cor. iv. 7.

for, outside the Church? Are they outside His Providence? That is evidently not the case. The world is not left absolutely to the power of darkness. The HOLY SPIRIT has His Cyrus, now,—His Cornelius,—His “nations” that are merciful.

We have, in S. Matt. xxv., a witness of this. First of all, the Judgment of the Church is pre-figured, in the Parable of the Ten Virgins,—five wise, and five foolish. The Elect of GOD, the Body Mystical, is judged first. Then, there is the Judgment of the officers in the Church, the “servants” of CHRIST, individually, with the one talent, or the five talents, or the ten talents. And then come the nations, outside the Church,—“all nations,” gathered before Him. And though these have not the privileges of the Mystical Body, yet they may inherit bliss and joy. They are judged by a real code; by a moral standard; by the law of mercy and compassion; by obedience to the law given in their hearts,¹ and by their attitude and action towards the Body of CHRIST,—the Church. When the Church came before them, were they kind to her? Did they feed her,—though they did not know that it was to CHRIST Himself that they were ministering? GOD’s HOLY SPIRIT did

¹ Rom. ii. 15.

not tell them that ; and so they are surprised when they hear it. Notice the surprise of the nations, when the King of Glory says to them : “Ye have done it unto Me !”

So, we find, the “nations” are judged,—those without the Church, as well as those within ; and the recompense is given to them of “Life Eternal,” although it may not be the same kind of life as the others will have.

Thus we see GOD the HOLY SPIRIT at work in the world of Providence, outside the Body of CHRIST. The question with regard to “all nations” is that of their attitude towards the Incarnation,—towards the Body of CHRIST. We see GOD the HOLY SPIRIT bringing all things round about the Incarnation,—that Embodiment of Divine Love ; leading everything up to the Incarnation, as the Centre of all history.

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ADDRESS III.

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT, IN THE CHURCH.

A TRUE view of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT's work, in Nature, will give unity to your life ; preventing its being broken up into two separate divisions,— sacred and secular. It will also help towards Recollectedness ; every living thing being a sign of His personal Presence.

A true view of His work, in Providence, will help you to realise His guidance as to your own vocation, your own place in the universe of GOD, your own part in the mystery of His Providence, your own relation to the great harmony of being that is stretched out around you. Your life is so bound up with that of the whole Kingdom of GOD, that you will never entirely know its meaning, until you see, revealed before you, GOD's great plan for His Kingdom.

What we want is to realise the *dignity* of our

life. We do not sufficiently respect our life and our souls ; we think they are so insignificant, that it is of little importance whether we do well or ill ; it will not help much to turn the scale, one way or the other. We must try to realise the dignity of our life, by thinking of the glorious plans and purposes of GOD which are being worked out in His Providence.

Another lesson to be learnt by looking at the HOLY SPIRIT's work in superintending Providence, is Patience ; "the Patience of the Hope."

This evening, we have to consider the work of the HOLY SPIRIT in the Church, the Mystical Body of CHRIST.

There are three great Unities revealed in Christianity, with all of which the HOLY SPIRIT has much to do. This threefold belief is the special characteristic of the Religion of CHRIST, separating it off from every other faith and religion.

(1.) The Unity of the Three in One, the Un-created GOD ; the threefold Personality of GOD ; that Holy Society, which is the Archetype of all society. If GOD were not Three, there would be no such thing as the "family," in Nature and

Providence, or in the Church. Society on earth is the reflexion of the Heavenly Society.

(2.) That Unity of the Two Natures, Divine and Human, in the One Person of CHRIST, wherein the operation of the HOLY GHOST is so specially revealed.

(3.) The Unity of the Church of GOD, as “one Body in CHRIST,” into which we are incorporated by the SPIRIT.¹

This last union is so close, so entire, so thorough a reality, that our LORD can only express it by pointing back to the Unity of the Godhead : “That they all may be One ; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee.”² He can find no adequate expression for that Unity, by comparing it to anything upon earth ; He has to point back, as it were, to the Source of all Life, in the Godhead, in order to shew us how deep that Unity is.

I have been trying to shew you, this morning, that you may find GOD near you in Nature, and at work around you in Providence. When you go out from Sacramental Communion, and public worship, and Sunday, into every-day life, you do not go out from GOD ; you do not pass into another

¹ Eph. ii. 22 ; iv. 4, 12, 15, 16.

² S. John xvii. 11, 21, 22.

life, at a distance from GOD ; you meet Him still, in Nature and in Providence. Though you do not hear His voice, there are traces of His footsteps, everywhere ; "the Finger of GOD" is at work, all around you. Remember the verse already quoted : "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." ¹ Dwelling in CHRIST, mystically, we shall abide under His Providence, in daily life. We find the unity of all being, under CHRIST our Head.

"But," you may ask, "if GOD is so near to us in Creation, and around us at work in Providence, what more do we gain, in His special sphere, the Church of GOD ? We know, of course, that the earth is the LORD's ; that the world is GOD's world. All history is the history of GOD's administration of the world by Providence ; no history is 'secular ;' no work, earthly ; none of His gifts are 'profane.' What then is the special characteristic of our own position, over and above all this, in the Church of GOD ? "

Our answer is this. In the Church, GOD the HOLY SPIRIT works from *within* ; in Nature and in Providence, He works from *without*.

¹ Ps. xci. 1.

(1.) The special glory of the Church is the personal indwelling Presence of the HOLY SPIRIT, making it the "Habitation of GOD," the "Temple of the Living GOD."¹ S. Paul says that, in the Body of CHRIST, we "have been all made to drink into one SPIRIT."

In Nature, GOD the HOLY SPIRIT is hovering over us; very near to us; touching us; kissing Nature, brooding over it, filling it with light and life and beauty.

He is near also, in Providence; guiding and governing the nations, lightly touching the wills of men, swaying their minds, giving the impulse to what we may call "the spirit of the age." All is working out the Will of GOD, the Plan of GOD. All this, the HOLY SPIRIT has to do with; lifting on the ship of humanity, swelling its sails with His breeze; guiding the world of Providence, yet still, not *within* it. Over Providence, He spreads His Wings, and "sweetly and prudently ordereth all things," with His controlling power.²

But in the Church, He works from within. Within the innermost sanctuary of our being, stands self; and behind self, in some real and true way, is the HOLY SPIRIT. The HOLY SPIRIT dwells in

¹ Eph. ii. 22. ² Cor. vi. 16. ¹ Cor. xii. 13. ² Wisd. viii. 1.

the Church, working out His purposes from within, till they reach the soul and body ; uplifting the affections of the soul, and finally quickening and re-animating the body.

(2.) Another characteristic difference is this. In the Church, He comes to us as “the SPIRIT of CHRIST.” He is, if I may use the word, “humanised ;” though not incarnate, nor less entirely GOD there than elsewhere. He is GOD, and GOD only, everywhere ; but, in the Church, He comes to us as GOD, through CHRIST ; not straight from the Godhead.

If He comes to us as “Light,” CHRIST is the Sun in whom that Light is gathered up, before it comes to us. The Light in the Revelation is blood-red ;¹ it passes through CHRIST ; dwelling first in Him, given to Him without measure,² and coming through Him to us, to give us “ grace for grace,” and to change us “from glory to glory.”³

Again, if He comes to us as “Water,” it is as the “River of the Water of Life, proceeding out of the Throne of GOD, and of the Lamb ;”⁴ not welling out like the ocean, in the original boundlessness of His Being, but coming to us in the

¹ Rev. xxi. 11.

² S. John iii. 34.

³ S. John i. 16. 2 Cor. iii. 18.

⁴ Rev. xxii. 1.

Humanity of our LORD ; not only in the Omnipresence of His Deity, but through and from CHRIST,—the waters of His boundless life dammed up there, so to speak, in CHRIST, till they come down to us.

This, observe, is the special glory of the Christian Church : the HOLY SPIRIT is revealed as coming to us through CHRIST ; not immediately from the Godhead, but mediately ; “ breathed ” upon the Church through CHRIST.¹

(3.) In the Church, the material with which He works is the Human Nature of Christ : not simply our own human nature, but the Human Nature of CHRIST. He takes of the things of CHRIST,—of the Humanity of CHRIST, and gives it to us. And then, He works upon that Humanity, in us ; blending it with our being, till it has so assimilated all in us that is merely natural, and of the old Adam, that CHRIST is formed in us. He works from within,—from the CHRIST *in* us ; and He works from a pattern, having the glorified CHRIST before Him. He moulds and perfects us after that pattern.²

Observe then what it is that makes the difference

¹ S. John xx. 22.

² Gal. iv. 19. Col. i. 27. 2 Cor. iii. 18.

between the HOLY SPIRIT's work in the Church, and in the world—of Nature and of Providence.

In the Church, He works from within. The Church is the great Tabernacle and Temple of the HOLY GHOST. In the innermost shrine, the Holy of Holies, dwells the HOLY GHOST. From thence, as “the SPIRIT of CHRIST,” Who is the Heart and the Head of the Church, He looks out upon the world,—upon Providence and upon Nature.

And then, in the Church, He is dealing with the Humanity of CHRIST, which extends through His whole Body; making the Blood of CHRIST course through the veins of all the members of that Body. We have within us not merely the old nature of Adam, but the Humanity of CHRIST which is communicated to us; the Life of CHRIST, circulating through the whole Body. The pattern is CHRIST, “the everlasting Father;” and in His Family, there must be His Likeness. “We are members of His Body, of His Flesh, and of His Bones.”¹

This, then, is what we have in the Church. Creation is not left to the Evil One, nor is Providence left to chance; the HOLY SPIRIT is there, bringing out the thoughts of GOD. But all this work is going on around the Body of CHRIST, as the end for which

¹ Eph. v. 30.

all things are ordered. The Church looks out upon Providence, as preparing the world for the coming of CHRIST's Kingdom. She looks out upon Nature, and sees, worked out in detail, HIM, Who is "the Firstborn of every creature." All Creation around us is the glory and beauty of CHRIST worked out in detail, in order that we may understand somewhat of the beauty and magnificence that there is in our LORD. But the intimate relation that subsists between the parts of CHRIST's Mystical Body with each other, and with their Head, can only be expressed, as our LORD said, by the Unity between His Father and Himself: "That they may be one, as We are." There is unity; yet there is distinct personality, by which individual gifts are preserved.¹

Of course, when we are brought out from the merely natural world—of Creation and of Providence, into the special sphere of the HOLY SPIRIT's operation, in the Body of CHRIST, GOD looks for something more in us than the merely natural. Yet that perfection to which we are being led on, by the HOLY SPIRIT, in the Church of GOD, is Nature still, though glorified and transfigured. It is no

¹ S. John xvii. 11, 21-23.

contradiction—it is the very fulfilment—of GOD's idea, that what He looked for from the beginning in Creation, He should find in the New Creation,—in the Church.¹ “This shall be My Rest for ever ; here will I dwell.”² GOD set this before Him, so to speak : to find His Rest in Humanity, re-created ; to dwell in us, and be the hidden Source and Centre of all our life.

GOD the HOLY GHOST is present, now, with the Church upon earth, in a much more special way than in the days of old ; though “the SPIRIT of the LORD came mightily upon” Samson, and “spake by the mouth of David” and of the Prophets.³

It is difficult to *realise* this fact : we can only bring it home to ourselves, by thinking how the LORD JESUS CHRIST was once present on earth. As truly and as personally as GOD Incarnate was on earth, eighteen centuries ago, so, ever since Pentecost, the HOLY GHOST has been with us. There has been among us, ever since, the Personality of a Sacred Being. The LORD JESUS CHRIST had

¹ Prov. viii. 30, 31. Gen. i. 26, 27. Col. i. 15—18. S. John xvii. 23. 1 Cor. vi. 16. Eph. ii. 21, 22. Rev. xxi. 2, 3.

² Ps. cxxxii. 15.

³ Judges xiv. 6, 19; xv. 14. 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2. Acts i. 16.
2 S. Peter i. 21.

all the outward signs of Personality,—hands, and eyes, and a voice ; therefore, it was easier for the human mind to apprehend Him. Still, the HOLY SPIRIT is none the less personally present ; a living Person,—with a will, and heart, and feelings ; —a living Person, Who can be grieved, disappointed, pained, resisted ; a living Person, Who can make intercession.¹ This is the mystery, in the Body of CHRIST ; that GOD is in the midst of us, walking up and down with us,² as JESUS CHRIST did in Jerusalem, or at Bethany.

Think of that home at Bethany: think how, when Martha and Mary were sitting in the house, a step might be heard, and a knock, and the door would be opened to admit the Heavenly Guest, and CHRIST would sit at their table, while the world outside was going on just as usual ! Think of the children playing in the streets, and the life of activity circling around, with all its passions and frivolities, while—only a few doors off—the Incarnate GOD was on earth, in sacred, personal, real Presence ; a living Person, seen and heard and touched, by those who were round about Him,² sitting at meat with Him, ministering to Him, and

¹ Eph. iv. 30. Acts vii. 51. Rom. viii. 26, 27.

² “I will dwell in them, and walk (*ἐμπεριπατήσω*) in them.

2 Cor. vi. 16.

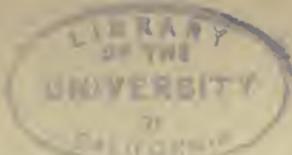
³ 1 S. John i. 1, 2.

glorying in being near Him ; forming, as it were, His “ Court ” upon earth. As that house at Bethany held the Incarnate LORD GOD, even so, in the present day, is the Church the abode of a Divine Person.

But the HOLY SPIRIT does not come and go, in the Church, like CHRIST at Bethany ; He is not like “ a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night ; ”¹ He is *always* to be found there. The Church is called His “ Tabernacle,” His “ Temple.” There He lives ; and there He distributes His gifts : laying hold of one soul, guiding another, disciplining and perfecting a third ; attentive, occupied, interested, with regard to all that goes on there ; as much a living Person, as was our LORD in that house at Bethany.

Meditate on our LORD’s Presence at Bethany, and then try to realise the dwelling-place and the Personality of the HOLY SPIRIT. It is very difficult. It is difficult to realise even our own personality,—the loneliness and majesty of our own individual being,—separate and distinct from the world in which we live and move and work. To realise the Personality of the HOLY SPIRIT, is still more difficult. But it is of great importance that

¹ Jer. xiv. 8, 9.



we should apprehend this Truth, and all that belongs to this aspect of His Being. Try to realise the fact of His personal Presence, as the special characteristic of the Church. "Ye are the Temple of the Living GOD ; as GOD hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them."¹

The HOLY SPIRIT not only dwells in the Church as His Habitation, but uses her as the living organism whereby He moves and walks forth in the world, and speaks to the world, and acts upon the world. He is the Soul of the Church, which is CHRIST's Body. "There is one Body, and one SPIRIT." "Ye are the Body of CHRIST, and members in particular." "Your bodies are the members of CHRIST." Do not confuse His Life and ours ; but our bodies, as "members of CHRIST," are His living instruments, the organs of the Divine Life, whereby He touches the world.² And the world *feels* the touch, —which is really the touch of CHRIST, mysteriously brought down, through His Church. The world comes under His influence, when it comes into contact with the Church, that special sphere of the

¹ 2 Cor. vi. 16.

² Eph. iv. 4. 1 Cor. xii. 27 ; vi. 15. Rom. vi. 13, 19.

HOLY SPIRIT's operations, wherein He brings down the Life of CHRIST into the souls of the Elect.

The office of the HOLY SPIRIT in the Church is, in one sense, ministerial. He ministers CHRIST to us ; He takes of the things of CHRIST, and shews them to us. He takes the words of CHRIST, and makes them living words to us. He does not shew us new things ; He is not the Revealer, but the Inspirer.

By the dogma of "Infallibility," a large branch of the Church has practically committed itself to a new revelation. By declaring that the HOLY SPIRIT, through one earthly voice, from time to time, makes fresh revelations of Truth, it has placed the HOLY SPIRIT in an office which is not His. It has set Him forth as a Revealer of new Truth, instead of One Who takes of the things of CHRIST, already revealed to His Church, and shews them unto us.

CHRIST is the Revealer ; His office it is, to tell the new things.¹ The HOLY SPIRIT's office is to make them real to us,—full of meaning, and life, and power,—while, to the world outside, they are dead and powerless :—to make CHRIST a living

¹ S. John i. 1, 14, 18. 1 S. John i. 1. Rev. xix. 13.

CHRIST to us. He does not take the place of CHRIST ; but He brings CHRIST to us, so that, where HE is, there is CHRIST.¹

CHRIST is not merely an historic CHRIST to us ; through the SPIRIT, He becomes to us a living Reality ; a living Person, with Whom we are brought in contact.

The practical question for each of us, is this : Are we in contact with Him, personally ? Is CHRIST, now and always, before us ? Do we, through the SPIRIT of CHRIST, realise Him as present with us, in His Humanity, not diffused everywhere, but walking “in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks ?”² It is the office of the HOLY SPIRIT to shew these things to us ; to take the things which CHRIST revealed before His Ascension, and afterwards,—to take the words of CHRIST in the Gospels and in the Revelation,—and to make them real to us.

Observe how the HOLY SPIRIT keeps, so to speak, in the background. “It is His wont to withdraw Himself, while ministering to Another’s glory.” He wants us to see CHRIST, to know CHRIST, to realise what CHRIST has done for us ; to be one with CHRIST. He wants to make the

¹ S. John xiv. 16-18.

² Rev. i. 13 ; ii. 1.

Passion of CHRIST effectual to us. He rests upon us as “the SPIRIT of CHRIST.”¹

It is important to discern what the HOLY SPIRIT has set before Himself to do ; what idea He is working out :—to form a Body—a Church, for CHRIST. This plan of GOD is fulfilled, in the great Body of CHRIST.

We must not think of the Church as made for individuals, but of individuals as made for the Church,—for CHRIST. This is the great plan of GOD. He wants members for the Body of CHRIST,—a Bride for His Son. He wants us, individually, in order that the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife, may be made ready. The Church is not merely a dispensation by which certain persons are to be made perfect, in their individual relation to GOD ; but you and I, each in our place, are wanted for the Church. This is the end and aim of all GOD’s work among us.

Study the Epistle to the Ephesians, and you will find that the final work of GOD,—“the mystery” up to which all things are leading, the plan for the sake of which they exist, the end for which individuals are created, and are brought into the Church, is this,—that CHRIST may have a Church. This is the great thought of GOD.

¹ S. John xv. 26 ; xvi. 14. Rom. viii. 9.

Remember those three great Unities :

- (1.) His own Unity ; the Three in One.
- (2.) The Unity of the two Natures, in our LORD.
- (3.) The Unity of the Body of CHRIST ; a created Unity, reflecting the Divine.

Because there is a Trinity to begin with, there is a Church to end with. GOD is not a solitary GOD ;—if He were, we might live as solitary beings on earth, and end with a solitary sanctification ! There is an Uncreated Trinity in Heaven ; and therefore, a created Society on earth. This thought of GOD is worked out, in the Incarnation ; it is expressed by the Eternal SON ; it is expanded and embodied, in the Church of GOD. “They shall walk up and down in His Name,”—the threefold Name of GOD.¹

Therefore, the great end and aim that we are always to set before us, practically, is not merely the salvation of individual souls, but the edification and glory of the Church ; the individuals are wanted, for the Church. The HOLY SPIRIT takes these individuals, and fits them into their place in the Church of GOD, that each of them may exhibit some ray of CHRIST’s light and glory and beauty

¹ Zech. x. 12.

or make up some perfection, in the City of GOD. The building up of the Church is the great end for which all Services, Ministries, and Sacraments, and all the Saints, are needed.

This is revealed, perhaps, more fully in the Epistle to the Ephesians, as I have already said, than in any other part of the Bible. Let us take some passages, as illustrations.

(Ch. i. 9-12, 18-23.) "Having made known unto us the mystery of His Will." What has been the great thought of GOD's Heart, from all Eternity, which is to be worked out, and to go on through the ages to come? "That He might gather together in one all things in CHRIST,—in Whom also we have obtained an inheritance." The predestination, the adoption, is a preparation for a final end ; CHRIST is to be glorified, as "Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body."

(Ch. i. 13-18.) Observe how much the HOLY SPIRIT has to do for us :—to give us spiritual intelligence and experience ; to enlighten the eyes of our understanding. GOD desires not only that the heart may be touched, but that the mind may be illuminated.

(Ch. ii. 19-22.) There is a Building to be "framed together," a "holy Temple." All are to

be brought in,—Jews and Gentiles together,—to make up this Building ; that GOD may have a “Habitation,” a House to live in,—a created human House, wherein to dwell, tenderly and joyfully. GOD would seem to crave for the sympathy of His creatures ; He wants them to understand and respond to His tender Love. They are to be brought in and builded together, that He may dwell in them, as His Habitation.

(Ch. iii. 1-11 ; v. 25-32.) This “eternal purpose” of GOD, to be manifested by the Church, is spoken of under the earthly figure of the “mystery” of marriage. The Church is not solitary ; she is united to CHRIST.

The LORD, under this great mystery, a secret of the Almighty GOD now told to us, celebrates His union with souls, and, *with* and *in* His Church, now walketh up and down in the earth. “I will dwell in them, and walk in them.”

One difficulty in realising all this is, that the Church looks so very human ! She needs all sorts of human agencies ; she wants money ; she depends upon outward circumstances ; she needs organisers, and common sense, and tact, and prudence ; she has to fight her way, like other powers, in the world.

Another difficulty is in our divisions.

All looks so very earthly ; those who bear rule in the Church are men of like passions with ourselves. If the HOLY SPIRIT is really dwelling in the Church, why does she not look more heavenly ?

The answer is this. GOD does not quench our free-will ; He reverences and respects it, as His own original creation. If we do not rise up to the supernatural, whose fault is it ? It is not because we have not Divine Power at our disposal, nor because GOD is not willing ; but because we fall back on mere natural thoughts. For instance, if we are looked down upon, if any scorn is dealt out to us, we give way to mere natural indignation. Instead of rising to the supernatural life, of meekness and grace, we are easily put out and offended, like the rest of the world. Or we care so much for our own comfort, like the rest of the world. Or we are caring for human praise and esteem, like the rest of the world. We do not yield ourselves, to be lifted up to the supernatural ; and we cannot be lifted up, unless we yield our will, and let GOD have His own way with us.

You ask : "Why is it thus in the Church, if GOD the HOLY GHOST dwells in her ? Is GOD really

near, in Nature, in the world, in the Church? Why then is man what he is? If GOD has all power, why are not all men ready to listen? Why do His purposes still fail?" Because of the mystery of man's free-will, which may resist and thwart GOD's Will. The failure does not lie in these great realities; it is because we do not yield ourselves to their power.

The special lesson is this,—the wondrous Humility of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT. This is the Dispensation of His humiliation. In the ancient Dispensation, GOD the FATHER was revealed, and slighted: then, GOD the SON had his time of humiliation, when He was upon earth; and now, it is the time of the HOLY SPIRIT's humiliation. In His wondrous condescension, He keeps Himself in the background, and desires to bring forward CHRIST, not Himself. "He shall testify of Me;"—"He shall glorify Me:"—"even the Spirit of Truth, Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him."¹

Learn then from Him, as a practical lesson,—as the practical devotion to be rendered to Him—the grace of Humility. We are to keep ourselves in the background, and to put forward CHRIST, and

¹ S. John xv. 26; xvi. 14; xiv. 17.

all that belongs to CHRIST. Yield yourselves to the HOLY SPIRIT, to be moulded by Him in this special way.

Ask Him to reveal to you the glory of this Dispensation. Why are we so earthly,—why are we kept down grovelling on the earth? Partly, because we do not yield ourselves to the HOLY SPIRIT. And partly, because we do not realise the grandeur of our position;—we do not apprehend with holy exultation the supernatural glories amid which we live and move.

If we have but a poor view of the Presence of GOD and of the Gifts of GOD, within and around us, we shall be starved and stunted, instead of rising up to “the measure of the stature of the fulness of CHRIST.”¹ But if we realise the position in which GOD has placed us, then, “we all, with *unveiled* face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the LORD, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the LORD, the SPIRIT.”²

¹ Eph. iv. 13.

² 2 Cor. iii. 18.

ADDRESS IV.

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE REGENERATOR OF THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL.

IT may be well, again to remind you of Psalm cxlii.; that you may keep it before you, to use devotionally, and dwell upon in detail. The last verses are especially applicable to our subject to-day,—the HOLY SPIRIT's work, in relation to individual souls.

“ Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth Thee, for Thou art my GOD: let Thy Loving SPIRIT lead me forth into the Land of Righteousness.” You come here, to be led forth to more entire trust in the Righteousness of our LORD; more complete conformity to His Will.

“ Thy Loving SPIRIT!” He is the Spirit of strength and power; of heroism and courage. We must not think that, because He is called the “Comforter,” He has to do merely with times of sadness, and sorrow, and sickness, and feebleness.

This translation of the word *παράκλητος* may sometimes have induced us to think that His office is to come to the aid of the sick and sorrowful only, not those who are in the midst of life's struggles. But the word also means, "Spirit of Fortitude ;—One who comes to the side of the soul, to cheer it on to the battle, and lead it back to the struggle, after failure and defeat ;—One who gives fortitude to the will.

This "Loving SPIRIT" is ready to "lead" you. He does not undertake to drive you—to drag you forth, against your will. He has too much respect for the Old Creation of GOD Himself, the great mystery of your being, to force your free-will ; but He is ready to "lead" you.

"Quicken me, O LORD, for Thy Name's sake!" You acknowledge your own helplessness ; you cannot "quicken" yourself ; you cannot revive one failing energy, or arouse one slumbering affection, or renew one dying aspiration. Therefore you pray, "Quicken me, O LORD!"

"For Thy Name's sake :"—not for anything good or beautiful that He sees in you, but because it is His work and His joy to quicken dead souls ; to raise up again those whom the tide of death seems in any degree to have overwhelmed.

"For Thy Righteousness' sake, bring my soul out of trouble." Whatever may be your troubles and difficulties, there are none out of which it is not His good pleasure to bring you, if He sees that it would tend to your sanctification. Some troubles there are, which GOD the HOLY SPIRIT uses as a means of spiritual blessing,—as a kind of "Sacrament" through which He operates, in carrying out the Will of the FATHER, which is "your sanctification."¹ But in so far as any trouble really hinders your life for GOD, you have only to ask Him to bring you out of it, as He brought Israel out of Egypt.

Look at Isaiah lxiii. 7-14. See Him bringing out Israel from the deep; superintending and guiding His people, "by the right hand of Moses;" putting His HOLY SPIRIT within him; strong and tender, though "they rebelled, and vexed His HOLY SPIRIT."

"And of Thy goodness slay mine enemies, and destroy all them that vex my soul, for I am Thy servant."

Your "enemies" still live, in spite of the HOLY SPIRIT's Presence within you. You might imagine, if you looked at it from a merely natural

¹ 1 Thess. iv. 3. 1 S. Peter i. 6, 7.

point of view, that if the HOLY SPIRIT were within you, there would be no enemies. But the enemies are still there ; the HOLY SPIRIT will "slay" them in time, but He will take His own time to do it. You may be none the less near to GOD, because your enemies are round about your soul. "The SPIRIT of the LORD shall lift up a standard against them."¹

The Presence of the HOLY SPIRIT within the soul is, in one sense, a challenge to the enemies to gather thickly round ; they are sure to come, when the soul sets itself to serve the LORD.

To-day, I will ask you specially to dwell upon S. John. xvii. Place yourself, as it were, in our LORD's Hand ; listen to that Prayer of His, in which He reveals His Mind, and Heart, and Will in speaking to the FATHER. It is the revelation of the Mind of JESUS CHRIST, about you. He is speaking to His Heavenly Father,—His Father and ours ;—and He tells His Father what He has in His Heart about you.

In this prayer, you will see a reference to the three subjects set before us to-day.

(i.) The HOLY SPIRIT, in His office of regenerating the individual soul.

¹ Is. lix. 19.

- (2.) Of renewing it, by the discipline of life.
- (3.) Of perfecting it, in glory.

This morning, we will think specially of your Regeneration, in the light of the Eternal Past, wherein GOD chose you ;—of your existence, as a *thought* of GOD, in the Heart and Mind of GOD, in the Eternity of the Past.

Then, in the afternoon, we will think of your Renewal, in the daily conflict of the Present, wherein the mighty interests of your soul are being determined.

And finally, this evening, we will think of your Perfection in the Future ; of the life which you are to go on living hereafter, in that Eternity to come, wherein you will still have the HOLY GHOST abiding within you, as a River of Life, making glad the City of God.

Yesterday, we saw His operation, first of all, in the great world of Creation.

Then, the circle narrowed, and we saw Him ordering Providence in the world, so as to arrange for the vocation of individual souls, and to minister to the fulfilment of GOD's great plan,—the building up of His Church.

Then we contemplated Him, as revealed to us in

the Church itself, the mystical Body of CHRIST : dwelling there, in a wholly different degree of nearness ; working there, in a special manner ; so that to be in the Church of GOD is to be, in a peculiar and intimate way, within the sphere of His operations and influence.

To be within the Church is greater far than to be even such a prophet as S. John the Baptist. Think how much the HOLY SPIRIT had to do with S. John the Baptist ; sanctifying him, from his mother's womb ; revealing CHRIST to him ; teaching him ; manifesting Himself to him, personally, at the Baptism of CHRIST, so that his eyes saw what scarcely any other mortal man ever saw, a kind of outward manifestation of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT, descending "in a bodily shape, like a Dove." He saw that great sight ; and the HOLY SPIRIT was, in a very special way, the Author of his life, as revealed to Zacharias ; and JESUS was revealed to him as "the Lamb of GOD."¹ And yet, S. John the Baptist was less privileged, in nearness to the great "Fountain of Life," than any one of us ;—less than the "least in the Kingdom of Heaven ;" less than the least little child baptized to-day !²

¹ S. Luke i. 15, 80. S. Matt. iii. 16. S. Luke iii. 22. S. John i. 29-34.

² S. Matt. xi. 11.

All this shews us how infinitely glorious is this Dispensation of the SPIRIT ;—what the privileges of the mystical Body of CHRIST really are ;—what is the real glory of the Church, as the “ Habitation of GOD,”¹ the dwelling-place of the HOLY SPIRIT, in which the promise is fulfilled : “ I will dwell in them, and walk in them,” *i.e.*, “ walk up and down in them,” (*ἐμπεριπατήσω,*) wherever the Church goes, —up and down in the earth ; “ and I will be their GOD, and they shall be My people.”²

Now, in the Regeneration of the individual soul, —which is our subject this morning,—the HOLY SPIRIT introduces the soul into this new world. It is “baptized into CHRIST.”³ It is “translated into the Kingdom of GOD’s DEAR SON ;”⁴ transferred from the Old into the New Creation of GOD. It is brought out of that world over which the HOLY SPIRIT only “broods,” into a world where He acts from within. He communicates to that soul the Humanity of CHRIST, the Life of CHRIST, diffused through His mystical Body, so that it is one with the “Head.”

In the sight of the angels, it is a marvellous work :—the soul brought into this new world,

¹ Eph. ii. 22.

² 2 Cor. vi. 16.

³ Gal. iii. 27.

⁴ Col. i. 13.

wherein the HOLY SPIRIT is dwelling, as the Spirit of CHRIST ; "called out of darkness into marvellous light ;"¹ clothed with all the glory and strength which stream from the Humanity of JESUS CHRIST !

Into this new world, all of you have been introduced, by Regeneration ; you have been brought into this heavenly sphere, where all the powers of the Kingdom of Heaven,—all "the powers of the world to come," are at work around you.

Think, first of GOD's electing Love ! "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you."² This is the key-note, in the thought of your Regeneration. You are where you are, because, ages ago, "before the foundation of the world," GOD set His Love upon you, and "predestinated" you "unto the adoption of children by JESUS CHRIST to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His Will."³

Before you were born, your salvation was wrought out : CHRIST died, and rose again, and ascended into Heaven, and sent down the HOLY SPIRIT. Then, the "Body of CHRIST" was prepared, into which you were to be in due time

¹ 1 S. Peter ii. 9.

² S. John xv. 16.

³ Eph. i. 3-5, 11.

incorporated. All this was done without any trouble, thought, choice, desert, or merit, on your part.

Then, when the fulness of the time had come, through the operation of the same SPIRIT, that thought of GOD about you was manifested in a visible form ; you were born, and you were baptized. GOD the HOLY SPIRIT carried out the purposes of GOD the FATHER with regard to you.

You might perhaps suppose that, as He has all Creation to govern, and all Providence to administer,—that mighty, vast expanse of life!—the interests of your individual life would seem to Him but a trifling concern. But He knows—He alone knows—what personal individual life really is ;—its capacities, its various interests, its manifold forms of development ;—what a world, in fact, each individual life is in itself.

There is your body, the outward and visible sign of your life ; your soul, with its affections and its intelligence ; and your spirit, by which you have communion with the SPIRIT of GOD,—that which you call the “I,” separating you from every-one else. But, deeper down still, within and behind all your bodily movements, all the thoughts of your

mind, all the affections of your heart,—deeper down than your innermost self, dwells, as in a hidden shrine, GOD the HOLY GHOST. Thence, from within, He looks out upon you. He is in the secret of all your life,—of every movement, every tendency; ‘for in Him we live, and move, and have our being.’¹ He has heard all your thoughts, “long before;”—before you uttered them; before you were even conscious of them, yourself.²

In every action of your life, He has either been obediently followed, considered, courteously dealt with; or else He has been ignored, rudely shut out, not consulted, not allowed to be to you that gentle, strong Friend that He came to be, and willed to be.

Within you, behind that infinite mystery of your lonely being, GOD the HOLY SPIRIT lives and moves; unless indeed,—which GOD forbid, and which cannot be the case with *you*,—“ye be reprobate!” The HOLY SPIRIT may be grieved. He may be resisted. And the life of resistance may go so far, as even to “quench” the SPIRIT.³ He *leaves* the soul, when in that condition; but not till then.

¹ Acts xvii. 28. ² Ps. cxxxix. 1-4. Rom. viii. 26, 27.

³ Eph. iv. 30. Acts vii. 51. 1 Thess. v. 19.

You can understand and apprehend, to some extent, the mystery of your own personality. You have felt conscious of certain capacities in yourself; of a capacity for sorrow, and a capacity for joy. And you have sometimes felt dimly conscious of your capacity for goodness. You have felt how happy you might be, in the service of GOD, in devotion to GOD; how free and blessed, in the liberty of His service, in companionship with GOD: you have felt what the passion of the Love of JESUS might be in you. You have felt conscious of a capacity for the Love of GOD. You have sometimes realised what are your capacities for goodness.

And you have at times been conscious also of the capacity for evil; you feel that you have been on the brink of sin, and that, but for some controlling force, some loving, gentle, restraining Hand laid upon you, you might have indulged in thoughts and actions which would have dragged you down into all that is "earthly, sensual, devilish."

The mystery of the human soul is that it is capable of the Indwelling of GOD, and yet capable also of the indwelling of—not one evil spirit only, but many; for their name is "Legion."¹

¹ S. Mark v. 9.

Besides this vast capacity of the human soul, there is yet another mystery:—its dependence. The human soul was not made to be independent of the spiritual world outside it. If left, by the HOLY SPIRIT, the Evil One, finding it “empty, swept, and garnished,” returns, with “seven other spirits, more wicked than himself,” and occupies it.¹ In trying to be independent,—to walk alone, without GOD, instead of having the HOLY SPIRIT as the Lord of the innermost Temple,—we immediately deliver ourselves over to be possessed by the spiritual forces that come from “the bottomless pit.”

And GOD, in His Love and Mercy, has provided that we should be made capable of the inhabitation of that HOLY SPIRIT, Who dwells within us; not in such wise as to overpower us, but gently; dealing with us with respect; reverencing our free-will.

And now, in thinking of GOD’s eternal choice and purpose concerning you, ask yourself:—

(1.) Have you been grateful to GOD, for the fact of being a Christian? Or have you regarded it as merely a matter of chance,—that you happened to be born in a Christian land, and were taken to

¹ S. Matt. xii. 43-45.

Baptism in the ordinary way? Have you ever really considered the words: "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you?"

In GOD's eternal purpose, you were a special thought; He considered what you should be, in His Kingdom. He so arranged all for you, that in the fulness of time, you should be brought into it, instead of being among the millions and millions who are left outside the Body of CHRIST.

(2.) Has this truth made you hopeful? GOD did not bring you here, to condemn you,—to heap responsibilities upon you; He did not place you in this very awful position of privilege, in order to wreck and ruin your soul. "GOD hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our LORD JESUS CHRIST."¹

Sometimes we deal with GOD suspiciously; as though He gave us His Church and His Sacraments, in order that He might say to us at the last day, to add to our condemnation: "See what I have done for you!" There is a deep suspicion of GOD, in the natural heart; but GOD the HOLY SPIRIT, dwelling in us, can turn it into trust and confidence.

Do you say: "It is too great, too deep a truth;

¹ 1 Thess. v. 9.

· too good to be true ; I cannot believe it ?"—As if *anything* were too great, or too good, for that GOD with Whom we have to do !¹ With Whom are you dealing ? With man,—with his limited ideas of greatness, his small plans and purposes of doing good ? Or with GOD ? You are dealing with the GOD Who created you, with those vast capacities for joy or sorrow ; with those powers for good, and those tremblings at the possibilities of evil, to the very brink of which you have sometimes brought yourselves ;—as if to shew what you might have been, if GOD had left you alone !

The thought of GOD's eternal Love to you,—of His eternal choice—ought to give you confidence and hope. GOD has not brought you all this way, in order to lead you to a precipice.²

Listen to our LORD's own words : "I have manifested Thy Name unto the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world : Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me." "I pray for them which Thou hast given Me ; for they are Thine : and all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine."

In GOD's eternal purpose, you are among those whom the FATHER has given over to CHRIST, as

¹ Is. xii. 2, 6 ; lv. 8, 9. Rom. xi. 33-36.

² 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14.

the fruit of His Passion. And CHRIST,—without leaving you Himself, for one moment,—has committed you to the guidance of the HOLY SPIRIT. He governs you and rules over you, in this Dispensation, by the HOLY SPIRIT. And GOD the HOLY SPIRIT's work is to communicate CHRIST's own Life to you, in order that you may reflect CHRIST ;—that so, CHRIST may look upon you, and see the reflexion of His own Glory and Love, worked out in you by the HOLY SPIRIT.

This thought, then,—of GOD's electing Love—should fill us with gratitude, and with hope and confidence.

One thing more! It should also fill us with holy Fear. Pray for the spirit of holy Fear ; a quiet seriousness ; in no way inconsistent with cheerfulness and mirth, but arising from a serious view of what GOD has done for you, so long ago. Has all this been prepared for you, “ before the foundation of the world,” and will you lightly *brush through* this life, with all its responsibilities, all its “ spiritual blessings ? ”¹

Then,—one act of Self-Surrender! GOD chose *you*, once ; it is for you, now, to choose *Him*. Say to Him : “ LORD, I thank Thee : I give myself to

¹ Eph. i. 3, 4.

Thee ; not because I must, but because I would, I give myself up to Thee ; that Thy eternal purpose for me may be fulfilled, and Thy plan realised, and that Thy thought may be brought out into the fulness of life and power.”¹

Let there be an act of conscious willing surrender to this blessed, loving purpose of Almighty GOD, and to all that it may involve. I say this, because it does involve possibilities of pain and difficulty, in some form or other. Yet there is nothing for which GOD has not arranged and provided. As He has provided for this nearness to Himself, so also has He provided for all difficulties which may be involved in this surrender of yourself to His holy Will.

¹ See Rom. xi. 33-36 ; xii. 1, 2.

ADDRESS V.

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE RENEWER OF THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL.

WE spoke, this morning, of GOD's eternal plan concerning our souls,—that eternal choice and predestination of us to the privileges of His Church, which is really the “predestination” to which our thoughts are always directed.

There is a Catholic—as well as a Calvinistic—doctrine of “Election ;”—one that is full of comfort. From all Eternity, GOD has provided for us a place in His Church ; He has elected us to the privileges of the Body of CHRIST. He has brought us into His Church, in order that we may be saved. Whether we are saved, eventually, or not,—this must depend, of course, upon our corresponding with the Will of GOD concerning us, and accepting His gracious purpose. But the fact that He has placed us here, in His Church, is an evident token

that “GOD hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation.”¹

All this, as we have already seen, is plainly put before us in the Epistle to the Ephesians. There we see the “eternal purpose” of GOD; how He has prepared for each of us, in His Church, a certain vocation, wherein we may glorify Him, and sanctify our souls, and perfect that idea which GOD has set before Himself concerning us.

In S. John xvii., to which I also referred you, our LORD thanks GOD His FATHER for having given us to Him, and asks Him to keep us while we are in the world, and to perfect the HOLY SPIRIT’s work in us, by all the discipline of life.

Observe, once more, the different offices of the Holy TRINITY. GOD the FATHER gives us to GOD the SON; and GOD the SON gives us into the care of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT. In this Dispensation, the HOLY SPIRIT is the Keeper of our souls. We are put into the Kingdom of His Royal and Princely Presence; we are placed under His guidance.

Our LORD refers, in this Prayer, not only to the present time, which is so momentous to us, and to the Future, wherein that “Eternal Life,” which He

¹ 1 Thess. v. 9.

has already given to us, is to be eternally developed in us, but also to the eternal Past, wherein the FATHER thought of us, and gave us to the SON.

Read the entire Prayer. Hear how CHRIST intercedes for His own Body, the Church; for those who are indwelt by His SPIRIT. Hear how He prays for us, in our present condition, "in the world;" that we may be kept in the unity of the SPIRIT, in the Body of CHRIST; that we may be "sanctified through the Truth;" that we may be glorified.

He prays, you will observe, for these three objects: that we may be kept, by the HOLY SPIRIT, from the Evil One; that we may be sanctified, through the Truth,—the HOLY SPIRIT taking the Truth of CHRIST, and making it real to us; that we may be made one with Him in glory,—perfected.

We are under the shelter of that Prayer. Our strength is in the Intercession of CHRIST, and the indwelling Presence of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT.

Now look at all this, as applied to us individually. This afternoon, we have to consider the office of the HOLY SPIRIT in training and disciplining the soul,—in *renewing the individual soul.*

The possibility of renewal comes from the fact

of the HOLY SPIRIT being a Person. If He were only an influence,—a certain quantity of some good thing, once given, which might be wasted and used up,—then, there would be no possibility of renewal. But HE—the HOLY SPIRIT Himself—cannot come to an end! However much you may have grieved Him, by being deaf, and blind, and inattentive to His gentle leadings, or slothful in following them, yet, if He is here at all, dwelling in you, He is here as a Person, in all His majesty, and glory, and strength ; in all the infinite resources of His Deity. As to His gifts,—His grace,—these may be given to you “by measure,” more or less:¹ but the HOLY SPIRIT Himself, inasmuch as He is a Person, is not with you at all, unless He is with you in all the fulness of His Divine Personality, in all the majesty of His Godhead.

Herein lies the hope of our continual renewal : this is our comfort, if we fall ; our strength, if we stand ; our secret of perseverance. “He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.”² GOD cannot anywhere be less than GOD ; He dwelleth in you, in all the power of His Divinity ; in His eternal, uncreated Majesty ; in the fulness of His Personality ; in the reality of His personal Will.

¹ Eph. iv. 7. ² S. Peter iv. 10.

² S. John xiv. 17.

Look at this “world” of the individual soul, with which the HOLY SPIRIT has to deal, in the work of renewal. What do you find, in the soul of the faithful child of GOD? The old nature, remaining ; and the new nature of CHRIST. And then, there is the Evil One ; not inhabiting the soul, but watching it from without. The Evil Spirit beleaguers the citadel from without, watching for an opportunity of entering ;—on the look-out, especially on the weak side of the character. But the inner part is evidently the province and sphere of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT alone.

On the one side, there is the old nature, the evil nature. But this is not, now, necessarily part of our real self ; for there is, on the other side, the new nature, received from CHRIST, to make its way against the old nature, and really to occupy its place. And there are all the good Angels of GOD, and all the powers of the Church of CHRIST, with which you are one, to set against the power of the Evil One. And then, within and behind your own personality, there is GOD the HOLY GHOST, dwelling in you.

But—determining the issue,—there is your *will*. On the surrender of your *will* it depends, whether the HOLY SPIRIT Himself, and the power of the

Church, and the assistance of the blessed Angels, and the prayers of the Saints, and all the majestic forces of the new nature of CHRIST, the all-conquering power of the Resurrection-life of CHRIST, is to have the mastery over this wretched nature, that we still drag about with us.

GOD will not take your salvation out of your own hands, and treat you like a machine. He has given you a free *will*. If you were merely a bright star, or a lovely flower, it might be reasonably expected that GOD should mould and perfect you as He pleased, without any co-operation on your part: but He would then be treating you as a lower part of His Creation. He made you in His Image, to be "Kings and Priests" unto Him. You have within you the mystery of free-will.

But observe how infinitely more there is for you,—on the side of good, on the side of your salvation,—than there is against you.

Against you, there is the Evil One; clever and experienced, after having tempted so many people; knowing how to reach various classes of people, by various temptations; knowing the weak side of your character so well, and knowing how to reach it. But after all, with all his vast knowledge and experience,—he is but a *creature*. He cannot know

you, from within ; he is not omniscient, nor omnipresent. He can only *guess* at your motives,—the secret spring of your actions ; he cannot understand them.

But GOD the HOLY GHOST knows all ! He dwelleth in you. He is able to win the day, against all the power of the adversary. The question, as to the issue of the conflict, is one that *your will* has to determine :—whether or not you will let GOD the HOLY GHOST have His own way with you.

Of course, we must do our part ; we must co-operate : we must use all the means in our power, for furthering the purpose of GOD concerning us. But, in the conflict and temptation of life, this new nature that we have received from CHRIST is in danger, at times, of being swallowed up and overwhelmed ; it needs renewing. It is not so given to us, once for all, as to be independent of the continual inflowing of the Life of CHRIST ; although its element—its germ—is so given, that we can never afterwards be as we were before. We must be kept in living union with Him ; the sap ever flowing into each separate branch of the Vine ; the life-blood circulating through each member of the Body. There must be, as in the natural body, a perpetual



flowing of the current of life, from the heart itself, through every part. If this ceases, the life itself ceases. This is the history of the soul, under its present probation. It needs the perpetual renewing of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT.

There is a two-fold purpose, in this life of renewal: The soul has a *probation* to pass through, as regards itself; and it has a *mission* to accomplish, as regards others.

(1.) A Probation. You are being trained here, in order that, when this life is over, your will may be fixed; that what GOD wills, you also may will, in the end; that the choice of good may be your joy,—not a difficulty, a doubt, a perplexity, as it often is now; that your understanding, your conscience, your affections, may all be gathered on the side of GOD, and of all that is good. Your will is being constantly trained, here, to the choice of good, by GOD the HOLY GHOST. His help is ever at hand, His unsleeping attention is given, in every emergency, as it arises. The building is always going on in us, as in Solomon's Temple, without sound of chisel or hammer; fashioned by the power of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT, Who is building up the spiritual Temple within you,—without noise,—without even those who are nearest and

dearest to you being conscious of the great work that is going on. GOD does His work quietly ; *Man*, with noise and demonstration. GOD works with such marvellous secrecy, with “clouds and darkness round about Him,”¹ that even you yourselves cannot hear or see what He is doing within you.

(2.) A Mission. As part of the Church, as a member of the Body, you are placed here to fulfil a part towards the Church ; to do good by suffering, or by action : by bearing patiently your own trials, and the trials of the Church, or by resisting the Devil in your own domain, and so weakening his power against the Church of GOD. Each victory over him is not merely gained for your own soul, but also for the Church. In this sense, you are called to sanctify yourself, even as CHRIST did, for the sake of the Church. “For their sakes, I sanctify Myself.”²

Thus you see that your life is a *probation*, and a *mission*. You are being “proved,” *i.e.*, tested, trained and disciplined, built up, for your own individual blessedness ;³ and also, for the good of the Church ;—as a tool which the HOLY SPIRIT

¹ Ps. xcvi. 2.

² S. John xvii. 19.

³ Deut. viii. 2, 16. Ps. lxvi. 10, 12. 1 S. Peter i. 6, 7.

employs, for the building up of the spiritual Temple around you.¹

In this process, you are in perpetual need of renewal,—the renewal of the spirit of prayer, and of faith ; the renewal of spiritual *tone*. At times, we become so dead, so wearied, so earthly ; there is no joy or love, in our religion ; all is gone through as a mere matter of duty. All this, from time to time, we look to the HOLY SPIRIT to renew.

There are two kinds of renewal : that of Conversion, in the soul that is in danger of letting itself die ; and the renewal needed by the faithful soul, from day to day, and from hour to hour.

This renewal is the work of a Person,—not a mere influence, or grace. It is the work of a living Person, dwelling in us, ever on the watch against the person of the Devil ;—knowing the secret springs and movements of our mysterious spiritual being, not only as GOD, but also as our Friend and Companion : thoroughly understanding us ; knowing our ways ; tender, full of compassion and sympathy. He has seen and known all :—your dangers and difficulties ; your discourtesies and rudenesses towards Himself ; how you have often treated Him, in the guest-chamber of your soul, as our LORD was treated by

¹ Eph. iv. 12, 16, 29.

the Pharisee.¹ “Thou gavest Me no water for My feet ;” it did not seem worth while to prepare a reception, for Me ! Like Martha, you received Him into your house ;² there was the hurried preparation: but—as for some earthly guest for whose *notice* you care, but whom you do not very much value, for *himself*. You provided that everything should be bright, and civilly ordered, for Him ; but—“thou gavest Me no kiss !” For Me,—your King and your LORD, your Friend, your untiring, patient Companion on the way, Who has taken you by the hand from childhood,—for Me,—“no kiss !”

“But,” you say, “if He were really here, in such close contact and fellowship, we should expect Him to do more than He does ; we should expect to be more *conscious* of His Presence. Why is this ?”

It is partly because, in mercy, He withholds the signs of His Presence. You know how dull we are, —how *rude* to Almighty GOD ; therefore, in very mercy, He does not come before us face to face, lest we should look into His Face, and turn our backs upon Him. He deals with us with a holy reserve, lest we should lose our souls ; for a terrible condition follows, when the glory of GOD is revealed

¹ S. Luke vii. 44, 45.

² S. Luke x. 38.

and then rejected. "Now have they both seen, and hated, both Me and My FATHER."¹

Therefore, in mercy, GOD withholds a fuller revelation of Himself. The touch with which Almighty GOD touches us is so gentle !

And, because it is so gentle, we say that it is not the touch of GOD ! We would have the strong Hand of our GOD upon us. The very gentleness of GOD makes us rebel !

But do you not remember "the gentleness of CHRIST,"—of GOD Incarnate,—when He was on earth ? The strong Hand that could wield the thunder-bolt, and bring down the pride of nations, was gently laid upon little children !² It was none the less the Hand of GOD, because it was a gentle Hand.

Remember, then, that the ways of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT are, like the ways of CHRIST, ways of gentleness.³ Yet they are none the less powerful, because they are so gentle. "The voice of the LORD is mighty in operation ; the voice of the LORD is a glorious voice :" it "breaketh the cedar trees :" and yet, after all, "the LORD shall give

¹ S. John xv. 24.

² Is. ix. 6, 7. S. Mark ix. 36 ; x. 16.

³ Ps. cxliii. 10. Rom. viii. 14. Gal. v. 18. Eph. iv. 30.

His people the blessing of peace,"—the quiet calm of His holy Presence.¹ Though He might easily raise a whirlwind in the heart, and prostrate souls before His tempest, yet it is in the "still, small voice" that GOD usually speaks to us. And because He does not speak in the loud thunder, we often do not think it worth while to listen; we think it is not the voice of GOD. Because He speaks to us so quietly, so humbly, so gently, we are offended!

This difficulty is always, more or less, rising up in our unbelieving hearts.

I have not time to speak to you, in detail, about the ways in which GOD the HOLY SPIRIT speaks to us,—the instruments used by the HOLY SPIRIT, besides His direct influence:—the Sacraments; the written Word,—which is His own special work,² and by which He seems so especially to speak to us; and a personal Ministry.

There is a certain danger, in these days, of depending too much upon some particular instrument of GOD the HOLY GHOST; forgetting that the power to help our souls lies not in any

¹ Ps. xxix. 4, 5, 10. Rom. xv. 13.

² 2 S. Peter i. 21.

particular clergyman, or form of devotion, or book, but in GOD the HOLY GHOST, to Whom our souls have been committed. We do not realise our privilege of intimate communion and fellowship with the HOLY SPIRIT,—ever ready with His loving thoughts, and having infinite resources at His command. He cannot be “put out,” by any “unforeseen circumstances.” All difficulties, in the way of duty, are provided for. Our souls are not less safe, in difficult circumstances; they are still in His holy keeping. His help is as *personal*, as that of any Minister whom He uses.

All the means of grace in the Church, remember, are sure signs of the nearness of GOD the HOLY GHOST. Where they are, there He is; there He never fails to be, whatever our dryness, our failures, or our want of realising His Presence.

But, on the other hand, He is not tied, absolutely, to any instrumentality whatever; much less, to any special human instrument. We dishonour Him, by resting too much on any particular agency or instrument,—any special channel of His life to us.

What we have to learn is the heavenly *order* of His Kingdom. In the Kingdom of GOD, everything has its own place and proportion.

Therefore, to have that decaying life of yours continually renewed, you must *use the means of grace*, reverently, and with confidence.

Remember, as your next rule, that the great way of resisting evil is by allowing the HOLY SPIRIT to pour into your heart the Love of your true LORD. Inordinate love of the creature, or love of what is evil in itself, cannot be effectually resisted by particular and direct antagonism. The love of evil is to be expelled by the love of that which is good;—by that heavenly affection which GOD the HOLY GHOST can create,—which He is in you on purpose to create,—“the Love of CHRIST.”¹ It is His special joy and glory, to reveal to us the Love of CHRIST; that we may, as it were, forget *Him*, to love CHRIST. The way to overcome evil is to trust to “the expulsive power of a new affection,”—the Love of CHRIST your LORD.

Then, as one last rule in this life of renewal and discipline, you must be perpetually *humble enough to begin again*. The great temptation in the religious life,—the life of those who try to do the will

¹ Rom. v. 5, 8. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Eph. iii. 16-19. 1 S. John iv. 19.

of GOD,—is *impatience*. We want to be saints, in a day! But GOD the HOLY SPIRIT is the Eternal GOD ; it took Him, perhaps, millions of years to bring the earth into its present form and order: He can afford to wait. To do the work too quickly, in our souls, might destroy some grace which He would develop.

The fault of religious people is impatience ; impatience with GOD, and with themselves. It is one of our great dangers. And the root of impatience, very often, is *pride*. When we have fallen, we are too proud to begin again. We cannot bear to see ourselves stumble,—to have to kneel at the feet of CHRIST and confess the same sins to Him, over and over again ; we want to be rid of the perpetual monotony of resolving against and confessing the same faults. “I have fallen again and again,” we say, “and it is of no use to try.” And so, we give up the struggle !

This impatience is the secret of so many becoming careless, after Confirmation. You began so many good things ; then, you omitted your prayers, perhaps, and relaxed many good habits ; and then you let yourself say : “What is the use of going on ?” Impatience came in, and pride, and cowardice ; not knowing the ways of the Eternal GOD,

with Whom “one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”¹

If GOD the HOLY SPIRIT takes twenty-five years to enable you to conquer one little fault, many others would probably be conquered in the same time ; and *it is something to conquer one fault, even in five and twenty years.*

¹ 2. S. Peter iii. 8. S. James v. 7, 8. Ecc. vii. 8. Hag. ii. 5. Hos. vi. 3 ; xiii. 4, 9 ; xiv. 4-7. S. Luke viii. 15. Heb. vi. 11, 12 ; x. 36 ; xii. 1, 2.

ADDRESS VI.

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE PERFECTER OF THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL.

SOME things which have been said seem to require a word of explanation, to prevent all misunderstanding.

In my first Address, I spoke of the highest degree of saintliness, as resulting in what is the most "natural :" I spoke of reverence for Nature ; of finding GOD the HOLY SPIRIT ever near us, in Nature ; of the proper relation of the spiritual man to the natural world.

I did not, of course, mean to imply that our life is not to be super-natural,—that GOD does not expect us to lead a super-natural life, when He gives us super-natural power !

What I meant was this :—to guard you against the mistake of supposing that when you go forth, after being brought into special contact with His

Presence, in Holy Communion, &c., into the outer world—of Nature and of Providence,—that you cannot find GOD there also;—not reverencing the order of Providence and of Nature. The HOLY SPIRIT Himself presides over it all; though He rules in a more exalted and infinitely more glorious way, in the Body of CHRIST. He is there, so as He is no-where else. Near as S. John the Baptist was to CHRIST, we, in the Church of GOD, are infinitely nearer.

Nor do I mean that there is no place or vocation, in the Church of GOD, for what is technically called the “religious life.”

There are various estates and callings, in the Church of GOD. We are not to say that one is “higher” than another. There is the calling of married life,—“the holy estate of matrimony;” and there is the calling of those who are specially set apart, in the “religious” life. And some, who are neither in the one estate, nor in the other, may yet be set apart to quite as Divine and heavenly a life, to be developed in them by the HOLY SPIRIT, as that in either of these two “holy estates.” Try to open out your intelligence to appreciate the wealth and magnificence of the life which GOD the HOLY SPIRIT can develop in the Church; taking

the Humanity of CHRIST, and making it blossom out and expand into such various forms of life, such manifold gifts and callings, to be fully manifested hereafter, in the City of GOD.

But then, another question arises. "How am I to distinguish the Voice of GOD,—the special inspirations of GOD the HOLY GHOST? How can I tell which is the right course, and which the wrong;—or rather, which is the higher 'right,' and which is the lower? Of course, there are the Ten Commandments, and certain rules and duties, definite and straightforward enough. But I want something more than this. How am I to recognise any *special* Call of GOD?"

Our life is to be guided by certain principles. If you think that the HOLY SPIRIT is suggesting to you a certain course, try it by the Holy Scriptures, by the order of the Church, by the authorities of the Church round about you, and by the indications of His external Providence, as to the probable results of that course of action. If the rule of charity and love, and that of personal self-denial, point the same way, there you are probably safe in going.

GOD has a definite plan and purpose for you,

individually. You are an eternal thought of GOD, which the HOLY SPIRIT will work out in you and help you to embody, if you yield your will to Him, and reverently follow His leadings. But you must not expect that the plan and purpose of your life shall be fully revealed to you, or fully developed in you, here. In this world, you are only *on the way* to "the City of GOD." When you get there, and look back, you will see how He has been leading you with the "pillar of the cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night;" overshadowing you, you know not how. You will remember all the way that the LORD your GOD has led you, here, in the wilderness, to humble you, and to prove you. But He often leads the blind "by a way that they knew not,—in paths that they have not known." What He does, we know not, now; but we shall know "hereafter."¹

Remember what has been already said, about impatience. GOD is preparing you, strengthening you, disciplining and training you, here, for your work and service, your appointed place, in the City of GOD, during the millions of ages in which you are to stand before Him, and worship Him, and serve Him, hereafter. Therefore, do not be

¹ Ex. xiii. 22. Deut. viii. 2. Is. xlii. 16. S. John xiii. 7.

impatient to know GOD's meaning and plan about your life, here.

Remember also what has been said with regard to the HOLY SPIRIT's office of renewing the soul, and the practical lesson which we drew from it:—the duty of being always ready to begin again, because He is the Renewing SPIRIT;—not a mere *influence*, once given, which can be used up, but a living Person, to Whom we can always go; always near us, with infinite resources at His command; ever ready to heal that which is wounded, and to bind up that which is broken.

This is the secret of “perseverance:”—to be humble enough to begin again and again, after failures and mistakes, relying upon the renewing power of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT. The question, whether you will persevere to the end, really depends upon this. If you are using the means of grace, by which He continually communicates to you the Resurrection-life of CHRIST, and if you are humble and brave enough to be constantly making fresh beginnings, you need not let the doubt about “perseverance” trouble you.

Our last thought is this:—the HOLY SPIRIT as “the Perfecter of the individual soul:” perfecting

your individual being, and perfecting the Church of GOD ; building it up, without sound of axe or hammer.

The question of "Perfection" is one which you must face as a practical question for yourself. I am not speaking of the time, nor of the methods, which it shall please Almighty GOD to employ in perfecting you. But you must look for Perfection ; you must regard it as a possibility—nay, rather as a certainty—set before you, that you are to be "perfect,"—to have done with the weaknesses and the littlenesses of your life. Set it before you as a distinct hope ; which I think some of us fail to do. We lose much strength and encouragement, if we do not realise that there is to be—not only no more pain, but also—no more sin ; no more infirmity. You are to be made perfect, in GOD : the Church around you will be perfect ; and you yourself perfect, in the Church. This Perfection will finally be wrought out, by GOD the HOLY SPIRIT.

Very strong things are said in the Bible about this hope of Perfection. Look at what S. Paul says, in his Epistles : "I pray GOD that your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the Coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST."

We are to be sanctified *wholly*; not only in one part of our nature, nor only with regard to one special grace. Again: "We pray always for you, that our GOD would fulfil all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power." And again: "The LORD is faithful, Who shall establish you, and keep you from evil." And then, think of our LORD's own words: "That they may be made perfect in one."¹

Great things are to be expected and looked for, you see, from the Indwelling of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT.

I have warned you against impatience,—the discouragement arising from having perpetually to fight against the same faults, and to acknowledge the same sins. Yet, while you must have infinite patience with yourself, you must have strong faith in GOD. You must look for great things from GOD the HOLY GHOST, Who dwelleth in you. "It is GOD which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure." "Is anything too hard for the LORD?"²

Saintliness, instead of being exceptional, ought to be very general; and it would become far more

¹ 1 Thess. v. 23. ² 2 Thess. i. 11, 12; iii. 3. S. John xvii. 23.

² 1 Cor. iii. 16. Phil. ii. 13. Gen. xviii. 14.

general than it is, if only we yielded to Him and believed in Him as we should do. GOD the HOLY SPIRIT is able, *constantly*, to produce saintly characters among us—such as John Keble, for instance ;—instead of the condition of the Church being what it is,—a few saints standing out from among the rest in special glory, as exceptions to the rule !

Yet He does not work all souls after exactly the same pattern ; each individual is not to be a copy of John Keble, or of any other saint. The power of the HOLY SPIRIT is not exhausted, in one special type of saintliness ; all kinds of type, all manners of excellence, are in the Kingdom. GOD has His own thought, about you, individually. And the HOLY SPIRIT will realise that thought of GOD, if you look upon CHRIST : some ray of His Light will be cast upon you ; some feature of His Beauty will be reflected in you.¹

And, if we look out for it, we do see, as life goes on, the HOLY SPIRIT leading people on, even in this world, to a great loveliness and depth of spiritual life. We observe it especially in *old* people :—in those who were trained in a generation when the Church was not what it is now ; and

¹ 2 Cor. iii. 18.

when, if we may say so reverently, Almighty GOD did not look for such manifestations of His grace as He has a right to expect now, when the Church is more quickened and alive. In old people, we often see such wonderful humility! GOD has led them on to such childlike reverence, such teachableness and docility! And as we stand in the presence of the old, and see how they have become like "little children," it should give us encouragement; shewing us how the grace which GOD gives does result, after all the discipline of life,—all its sorrows, mistakes and failures,—in that childlike heart, which is very near to *His* Heart. They have become, like David, men "after GOD's own heart."¹

But it is not only here, upon earth, that His work of perfecting the soul is to be carried on, by the HOLY SPIRIT. You have a long life before you! You are beginning, here, your eternal life. And He will have to do with you, all through your life. The work which the HOLY SPIRIT has begun in you now, He will not complete until the Day of the "Restitution of all things."

Having stood by you, as the Champion of your life, amid the warfare of men's opinions, in "the

¹ S. Matt. xviii. 1-4. 1 Sam. xiii. 14.

evil day" of earthly fever and strife and passion, wherein you have found it very difficult to hold your ground ; having stood by you throughout, as your Champion, your Advocate, your "Paraclete," and enabled you to "withstand in the evil day," He will be with you still,—you will still be under His care,—in your old age. After life's fever, shall come calm ; after the strife, rest ; instead of the tumultuous ocean, there shall be the deep, flowing "River." ¹

He came, as the Spirit of Strength, to give you a *strong* religion ; making you calm amid a restless world, and peaceful and childlike in old age, so as to give to the young a shadow and earnest of the Rest which remaineth for the people of GOD.²

And then, you will be taken behind the Veil,—into "Paradise." There also, you will still be in the charge of the HOLY GHOST. As He abode with the Body and Soul of CHRIST after His death, so will He abide with you, and "walk up and down" with you, in Paradise. You will be led unto "Living Fountains of waters ;"—to that River of Living Water,—a type of the HOLY SPIRIT,—"proceeding out of the Throne of GOD and of the Lamb," "the streams whereof make glad the City

¹ Rev. xxii. 1.

² Heb. iv. 9.

of GOD;¹—that part of the City, called “Paradise,” where disembodied souls are taken for “retreat,” to be quiet, after the fever of life; to be thrown back, it may be, upon those great Truths of GOD, which you have taken in, one by one, but have failed to harmonise, here.

Observe, I am not speaking of the life after the Resurrection, but of the waiting-time *before*; that blessed interval, of contemplation and of worship, wherein the soul lives in the Light of the Saviour’s Countenance, growing and expanding in the blessedness of that happy “intermediate state,” when all that “lets and hinders” us, here, shall be “taken out of the way.” Here, “the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things;”² but there, we shall take in the Truth of GOD, and shall be sanctified through the Truth.

We must therefore remember, when we speak of the HOLY SPIRIT’s “perfecting” work, that there will be much to be done, as to the perfecting of the spirit,—and probably, much to be revealed,—in the intermediate state; though not, of course, involving the necessity of pain. We often grow and expand, and the Love of GOD takes hold upon

¹ Rev. vii. 17; xxii. 1. Psalm xlvi,

² Wisdom ix. 15.

us, quite as much in happiness as in sorrow. There is a discipline of happiness, as well as a discipline of suffering, in our Father's household. We need not assume that there must be a "purgatory" of pain, because we see a need of growth, in many souls that are taken from us, at the time of their departure. Souls can grow, in the Light of GOD ; they can be illuminated, "under the Altar."¹

But after that, there will be the life of Resurrection, wrought out in us by the same HOLY SPIRIT. "He which raised up CHRIST from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by His SPIRIT which dwelleth in you."² He will lay hold of your bodies, and fill them with the Resurrection-power of CHRIST. Instead of weakness, He will give strength ; instead of corruption, incorruption. Instead of the image of the earthly, there shall be the image of the Heavenly. Instead of the "natural body," He will give "a spiritual body :—" "spiritual," yet a *body* ; a body, to be the Temple of the SPIRIT ; a body, completely organised by the SPIRIT ; the outward, so in harmony with the inward, that the music may be brought out from the instrument, without one discord to mar the harmony.

¹ Rev. vi. 9.

² Rom. viii. 11.

Till then, the work of the HOLY SPIRIT will not be complete. The “perfection” for which our LORD prayed on your behalf cannot be fully accomplished till the Resurrection of the Body, which is to be brought about by the HOLY SPIRIT. And even after that,—all through Eternity,—we shall still be learning more and more of GOD, and of “the exceeding riches of His grace;” in the eternal dispensation of “the ages to come.”¹

This thought should save us from impatience. It is all to be very slow work; and yet we know that we are to look for grand and magnificent results from the Indwelling of GOD the HOLY GHOST, which has already been accomplished.

After all, the great thing has already been done! It is not so wonderful that you should be “made perfect,”—“raised in glory,” hereafter, as it is that you should have GOD dwelling in you, now. That is the mystery; the other is only the natural result of the mystery. The development of life does not seem so great a thing as the giving of life, the implanting of the germ. In the sight of the Angels, its full development, in the life of Heaven, is only the natural result of being in the Body of CHRIST,—partakers of the Life of CHRIST;

¹ Eph. ii. 7; iii. 21.

only the natural result of the mystery of CHRIST IN US.¹

This is the great mystery that we are to contemplate, with thankfulness and loving confidence. We cannot understand it,—none of us can do this, in the way of comprehension,—but we can try to *apprehend* it; and it gives a dignity and blessedness to life, which we otherwise lose; a dignity which is no less a reality, because we are only “little children,” and cannot understand it. We begin to see something of it,—to catch broken lights; but we do not, as yet, take in the full view of GOD’s wondrous purposes.

One thing, at least, is clear. We have to begin, here, in this life, the ways, the manners, the customs, which are to go on in the life of Paradise, and of Heaven itself.

And now, what do we know, concerning the life of Heaven?

I. We shall *see the Face of God*. “They shall see His Face, and His Name shall be in their foreheads.” “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”²

It is the HOLY SPIRIT Who gives that purity of

¹ Col. i. 28.

² S. Matt. v. 8.

heart. It is the HOLY SPIRIT Who gives the power by which we begin to "see GOD," here,—to "behold with open face the glory of the LORD."¹ How could the creature ever look upon the Creator Himself, before Whom even the Angels veil their faces,—how, but for the indwelling of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT? Who shall see GOD, and live?² Who but GOD Himself, dwelling in us, can help us to look out, and "see GOD?" To enable us to bear the Beatific Vision,—to "see His Face," we must be "sealed" by the HOLY SPIRIT; we must have the Father's Name written on our foreheads.³ This alone can enable us to look upon GOD, without being consumed.

II. It will be a life of Worship. To "worship" is to bring all that we have, before the Throne of GOD. Worship requires the understanding, the will, and the affections. Not a mere part, but the whole of our nature, is to unite and be offered up in worship,—in the *corporate* worship of Heaven. And this power of worship—this spirit of adoration and praise—can only come from the voice of the HOLY SPIRIT within you. We need the help of

¹ 2 Cor. iii. 18.

² Ex. xxxiii. 20.

³ Eph. i. 13; iv. 30. Rev. vii. 3; xiv. 1; xxii. 4.

the HOLY SPIRIT, to begin, here, upon earth, that life of worship of GOD which is to go on for ever in Heaven.

What would it be, if only we could say one “Gloria” in the true spirit of worship,—one “Our Father” in the spirit of little children! It would be a foretaste, in some small measure, of what it *will* be, hereafter, to have our whole being in communion with GOD; a foretaste of that life of joy and worship,—the surrender of our whole being, not of our emotions and passions only, but of our whole moral and intellectual being.

Try to begin the life of worship, by setting yourself, now and then, to say the Lord’s Prayer in the spirit of a little child, without distraction. You will find it very hard, and very humbling. If only you try to join in one “Te Deum,” thoroughly, on some great Festival of the Church, it will give you some idea of the great worship of Heaven.¹ Here, the HOLY SPIRIT “maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” Here, He “helpeth our infirmities.”² But those infirmities will all be done away with, in that great worship, where the fulness of His Breath will be lifting us up.

¹ Rev. iv. v.

² Rom. viii. 26.

III. It will also be a life of Work, of active service: for it is the life of a "City." There will be, not only individual, isolated activities, but *corporate service*, in the life of a perfected Society. We shall see around us the full manifestation of the SPIRIT, in the order of Heaven.

In the Church of GOD, here below, we are being trained and attuned to the order of Heaven.¹ The City of GOD is not built up *anyhow*, but according to a plan, an order, a constitution, a polity. It has twelve foundation-stones, and twelve gates, and "the City lieth four-square." There, as well as here, outward order and true spiritual life are one; they grow together, and help each other. There is no dividing-line, either here or there, between the "order" of the Church, and the "spirituality" of the Church. In the outward order of the Church, here, we are trained for the constitution of the heavenly City, with its "four and twenty Elders," its "twelve stones," &c. Whatever all that symbolism may mean in detail, it clearly indicates the great ruling principle of Order. The HOLY SPIRIT uses, as the symbol—the expression and manifestation—of the life of Heaven, the order of a great City, a great Society.

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 33, 40. S. Matt. vi. 10. Rev. xxi. 10-27.

The thought that I want you to carry away is this. The HOLY SPIRIT is beginning a work within you, which He means to perfect, in one continuous line of growth, development, and manifestation. Your life is not to be that of one being, here, and of another being, under entirely different principles, hereafter. The circumstances will be different, but the principles upon which the HOLY SPIRIT carries on His work, in sanctifying and perfecting the soul, are eternal. Therefore, your life on earth has a purpose, a meaning ; you are beginning your *eternal* life, on certain principles, which will hold good as long as you live ; and you will live on to Eternity !

Do you ask, what are the true principles which shall help you in reaching on to the perfect life ? How shall you go on unto perfection ?

There are two great perfecting principles : Love to CHRIST, and love to His Church.

I. *Love to the Perfect One*, revealed in JESUS CHRIST, the Incarnate SAVIOUR. The work of the HOLY SPIRIT is to help you to love Him. And in loving Him, you will find your life growing. It is the law of life, that we become like those whom we love. Therefore, if you love CHRIST, you will

become like Him. But you cannot love CHRIST, without the help of the HOLY SPIRIT. If, then, you want to be perfect, ask that the HOLY SPIRIT may pour into your hearts more love toward JESUS CHRIST. This is the first principle of growth,—of going on towards the perfection which our LORD sets before us: “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your FATHER which is in Heaven is perfect.”¹

“LORD JESUS, give us grace
On earth to love Thee more,
In Heaven to see Thy Face,
And with Thy Saints adore.”

II. *Love to the Church.* If we are true to the SPIRIT of GOD, we shall love the Church. For the Church is in intimate union with the HOLY SPIRIT: the Church is the Body of CHRIST, and the HOLY SPIRIT is the Soul of the Church. They are linked together. There is no need of any antithesis; how can there be? How can we love CHRIST, without loving His Body, His Bride? How can we listen to the one, without listening to the other? “The SPIRIT and the Bride say, Come;” they are associated,—linked together: we *must* love that Church, which is the great instrument and manifestation of the HOLY SPIRIT.

¹ S. Matt. v. 48.

Where the Church is, there is the HOLY SPIRIT ; and where the HOLY SPIRIT is, there is the Church of GOD. “ Hear what the SPIRIT saith unto the Churches : ”¹ hear what the Church has to give over to you from Him ; hear what He has to say to you, by her.

And now, one practical rule, in conclusion. Be careful about *little duties*, and be careful about *little faults*. For, in this way, we do honour to the HOLY SPIRIT, Who is so gentle, so full of delicacy, in His operations ! He wants to give us tenderness of character ; not merely a rough rude sort of goodness,—though even that, so far as it goes, is a thing to be thankful for,—but tenderness. I do not mean a morbid, scrupulous spirit, in your religion ;—that is very different ! And the way to gain that tenderness is to be very careful about little things ; little duties done thoroughly, for which you will get no credit, and of which the HOLY SPIRIT will be your only Witness, and your only Reward.

Guard against unreality, in dealing with the HOLY SPIRIT, by watching against—and asking His aid against—some little fault, which, it may be, spoils the beauty of His work in you, and makes

¹ Rev. ii. 7.

your religion fail to be attractive to others, as it ought to be. Not that this should be a first consideration ; if we are true and real, most other things will take care of themselves : but we must watch against these little faults. Be true and real, then ; and—in the highest sense—be “natural.” But be careful about little matters ; and especially about little matters of *courtesy* ; because the HOLY SPIRIT is so opposed, in His Nature, to everything that is rude and selfish !

This, then, is our last practical rule : “*Be careful about little duties, and little faults.*” Remember what S. Francis de Sales has said : “The greatest saint is not the man who does extraordinary things, but the man who does ordinary things extraordinarily well.” For there, in those “ordinary things,” self-will and self-conceit find less room, and there is more room left for homage to the SPIRIT of GOD, Whom we are to worship and adore.

And now, as the practical outcome of these Quiet Days, try to make this Resolution :

“*In the Name of my God, I will endeavour to overcome this fault ;*”—no matter how small a one, —that particular fault which stands most in the

way of your perfection, and prevents your prayers from being peaceful, and your Communions happy ; —“*I will try to be holier and better, and to follow more closely the example of JESUS CHRIST. And this I will do, not in my own strength, but in the strength of GOD the HOLY GHOST, Who is dwelling in me.*”

I will now read, once more,—while you stand,—that solemn Prayer of our LORD which is to be your strength and encouragement in the Life of Regeneration and of Renewal, while looking on to the Life of Perfection. And then, we will end with the “Te Deum.”

SERMON I.

THE LIFE OF THE BLESSED, IN PARADISE.

“To depart and to be with CHRIST, which is far better.”
PHIL. i. 23.

IN these words of the Apostle, who, as he tells us elsewhere, had himself been “caught up into Paradise,”¹ and had there been taught what he had not heard before, “whether in the body or out of the body,” he could not tell, we have a summary of the Christian’s view, and the Christian philosophy, of Death and the Intermediate State.

He speaks of death seriously; not flippantly and jauntily, as some have done, even criminals upon the scaffold. And yet, he speaks of it as quietly, as people might talk of breaking up their home in London, and going into the country; or of a voyage to another land, where they have dear friends and many interests, already awaiting them. He does

¹ 2 Cor. xii. 4.

not regard death as the full stop or conclusion of all things ; but rather, as the entrance to a sphere, to the centre of which he had been already looking, and of the life of which he already formed a part. When he departs, S. Paul is still to exist ; in a truer and a more real life.

And he is to be “with CHRIST.” That life, after death, is to be one in which CHRIST, his Master and his Friend, is to be with him, and he is to be with CHRIST, in a sense in which he could not be, here.

Moreover, he gives us an estimate of what that life is, in comparison of this. It is “far better ;” or, as the original might be translated, “*far, far* better !”

And yet, my brethren, S. Paul took no morbid view of this life. His “desire to depart” was no mere selfish desire to have done with trouble, and to get away from conflict. If any personal motive was drawing him away from his friends, and from the souls over whom he had been in charge, it was that he might look more nearly upon the Countenance of his Master ; that he might be more in His Presence, and more entirely at His disposal. S. Paul appreciated this life ; he realised the grandeur of the work which might be done in it. “To abide

in the flesh," he says, "is more needful for you :" and so, he would seem to say, as there is so much to be done here, I really can scarcely say which of the two I would choose, if the choice depended upon myself. My great desire is "that CHRIST shall be magnified in my body ;" therefore, it does not very much matter "whether it be by life, or by death ; for to me to live is CHRIST, and to die is gain."

And, while he realised the grandeur of the work, he also knew how much was already given to him of spiritual blessing, in this present world : that he was already in the Kingdom of GOD, already with CHRIST in heavenly places ; already "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, in CHRIST."¹ In an earlier Epistle, he had thus written : "Whether we live, we live unto the LORD ; or whether we die, we die unto the LORD ; whether we live therefore or die, we are the LORD's." In any case, we are the LORD's : whether here or there, we belong to Him Who is LORD of our whole being,—body, soul, and spirit ; "LORD both of the dead and living."²

Try to realise the great worlds, visible and invisible, which S. Paul always saw around him.

¹ Eph. i. 3 ; ii. 6.

² Rom. xiv. 8, 9.

First of all, then, there was “Heaven :” the world of the Throne of GOD—the world of the risen and ascended CHRIST. Then, there was “Paradise,” the vestibule of that world, so to speak : “Abraham’s bosom :” where the souls of the Blessed were dwelling ; the “Paradise” into which he had once been caught up, and where he had heard those “unspeakable things.” And then, this visible world ; this theatre of conflict between GOD and the Devil,—between Heaven and Hell,—between the Will of GOD and the counter-plot of the Evil One.

And on the other side, Holy Scripture has revealed to us the great Abyss ; the Abyss in which the evil spirits are raging, which is disclosed to us in the Book of Revelation ;¹ and then, as the vestibule or court leading to it, there is “Hell,” the place of departed souls that have failed to respond to the touch of GOD, to the grace and to the love of GOD ; the world from which our Blessed LORD takes away the veil, in the parable of that rich man who had not lived for GOD, nor laid up treasure for his own undying soul, nor prepared for himself an eternal habitation.²

Of that place, where those are who have departed

¹ Rev. xx. 1.

² S. Luke xvi. 19-33.

this life *not* in the faith and fear and love of GOD—*not* in penitence,—we do not now propose to speak. But this we seem bound to say, in passing. However justly we may find fault with the mediæval conceptions—sometimes ludicrous, yet unspeakably painful—of that place of lost souls, yet,—as one indeed has well said, even if all those pictures and images were *misconceptions*, they can scarcely be *exaggerations*. They can scarcely come up to what our LORD Himself tells us, with awful, Divine tranquillity, of that place where the separation between the good and the evil has become the “great gulf fixed.”¹ However true it may be, then, to say that there have been misconceptions, yet, when we read our LORD’s words, and remember Who spake them, he will be a bold man indeed,—a man who can scarcely measure what language means,—who dismisses at once all those misconceptions, as *exaggerations*.

Thus, you see, Heaven is revealed to us as opposed to the Abyss; and Paradise, as opposed to that place of which our LORD says that “in Hell he lift up his eyes, and seeth Abraham afar off.” And then, there is this visible world, this world of conflict, wherein souls are separating

¹ S. Luke xvi. 26. S. Mark ix. 43-48.

themselves with that great separation, the first lines of which only the Eye of GOD can see.

But our subject to-day is "Paradise :" the life of the Blessed in Paradise, as indicated by S. Paul in the words of our text : "To depart and to be with CHRIST, which is far better."

This thought is first presented to us, in the words of our Blessed LORD Himself, addressed to the penitent malefactor : "To-day"—with life and consciousness still going on—"to-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

It might however have been said, but for S. Paul's words afterwards, in our text, that this blessed fellowship with our LORD in Paradise could only have been possible, during that holy Easter Eve when our LORD was Himself there ;—when His Body was lying in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, and His disembodied Soul, in union with His Godhead, in some ineffable way, in His real Humanity, went into Paradise, and there continued His work of preaching the Kingdom of GOD. We might have been tempted to suppose that we shall be really more absent from the LORD, instead of being more really present with Him, when we go hence, but for the words of S. Paul: "To depart, and to be with CHRIST, which is far better."

The subject with which we are dealing is of great practical importance. *Meditation upon it is the best corrective of worldliness.* And this, I think, is the great temptation of the day. When I consider the temptations amidst which we now live, the probation which we now have to face, and the difficulties with which we now have to contend, it seems to me that there is a “great tribulation” coming upon the faithful, in the form—not so much of unbelief as—of *worldliness*; because the world is becoming more and more full of interest, of brilliancy, of life, of vitality.

We must always remember that it is GOD’s world, not the Devil’s world; that all this manifestation of growth, and development of life, and beauty and interest, come from the germ which GOD Himself has planted in society and in human nature. We are not to treat the world as if it were a creation of the Evil One.

Nevertheless, it is becoming more and more,—for those who have leisure, for those who have mind, for those who have money,—a distracting world; an absorbing world; exacting more and more of our time, of the labour of our brain, of the energy of youthful life, and of the thought of middle age. Hence, it is becoming a world which

shuts out GOD from us, and which shuts us out from ourselves.

The great corrective of worldliness, however, is not simply to preach against it and to set ourselves against it, but to realise that around us there is another world ; with as true an interest, with a greater glory and brilliancy. We have to take in the *whole* state of things around us ; not merely this little bit of GOD's great universe ! We have to "look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen."¹ "Our citizenship is in Heaven :"² we must learn to realise the City, and its Citizens ;³ the Society, the Company, in which our true life is thrown ;—giving some time, quietly and calmly, to take in these unseen realities, so as to gain a truer apprehension of the world invisible. To us, in this present world, it is invisible ; and yet, in one sense, it is as *present* as this visible world. It is a real world, now going on, into which any of us may, any day, be called to enter. It is around us, now. The majority of men are there already ; and most of us will also be there, before fifty years are over.

To take in *all* the facts of life, all the realities of

¹ 2 Cor. iv. 18.

² Phil. iii. 20.

³ Ps. xlvi. i. Ezek. xlvi. 35. Heb. xii. 22-24.

life, invisible as well as visible,—this is our business ; and this will be our best safeguard against worldliness. .

Our consciousness, in this life, is threefold ; we are conscious of GOD, of ourselves, and of other people and things around us. There is world-consciousness, and self-consciousness, and GOD-consciousness. But, of these, world-consciousness is the strongest. It usurps an unlawful and illegitimate dominion over all the faculties of our being. We are scarcely at all conscious of ourselves ; there is a tendency to live without realising even self,—not to speak of realising GOD. More and more, perhaps, people accustom themselves to live in public ; they can scarcely bear to be quiet by themselves : if they find themselves alone, they take up a newspaper or a review,—something to do with the outside world. Thus, the spiritual part of our being fails to have its rightful supremacy.

Now, one purpose of the Intermediate State may be to restore the balance : to give back to the spirit its true place. Going into the Intermediate State may be a falling back, as it were, into ourselves and into GOD ; the spirit returning to GOD Who gave it, in order to realise the great fact of the

Presence of GOD, which we have such a tendency to forget. For, though GOD is about us everywhere,—though it is GOD's air that we breathe, and GOD's light that we rejoice in,—though "in Him we live and move, and have our being," yet to realise the fact of the Presence of GOD is, we all know, intensely difficult. It requires years of patient practice in the spiritual life, even on the part of the holy and true, to do it easily and constantly.

People would also be surprised to see, if they would examine themselves, how little they have of true "self-consciousness." What they call "self-consciousness" is, in reality, a consciousness of other people! They are intensely conscious of what, as they imagine, other people are saying or thinking about them; and a blush mantles the face, and the manner becomes hesitating, because of this consciousness. It is not self-consciousness, you see, but consciousness of others.

The way to correct this, spiritually and religiously, is to try to be continually conscious of a much larger world surrounding you; so that one or two more people coming before you will not make much difference! It will merely be adding one or two more, to the great cloud of witnesses by

whom you are already compassed about, beneath whose watchful contemplation you are running the race set before you.

So, when the purposes of this earthly discipline are fulfilled, it may be that—having put off this corruptible body, by means of which we come in contact with the material world now around us,—we shall, as I have suggested, being set free from world-consciousness, get the balance—between the spiritual and material—properly restored. While we are withdrawn, to whatever extent it may be, from consciousness of this life, in the Intermediate State, there will still be consciousness of self, and of GOD. Of these, we shall be only the more intensely conscious; all that now lets and hinders us being gone.

These thoughts are suggested, that you may examine the subject for yourselves. Search the Scriptures. You know how constantly the fact of this continued consciousness is brought before us.

“But, as the condition of such consciousness, there must be,” it will be said, “some bodily presence. How can this be, when I leave the body?”

We must not positively assert, what Scripture

does not warrant. But 'it seems to us, that Holy Scripture, so far from saying that the spirits and souls of the righteous have no bodily form when they depart hence, seems to imply the contrary. Not this earthly body, of course, yet some sort of bodily phenomenal investiture, seems to be implied, throughout. The souls of the departed are spoken of as being not only recognised, but, in some sort of spiritual way, seen.

Every word of Holy Scripture that speaks of the departed says the same. Our LORD says of the rich man, that he saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Lazarus is distinguished from Abraham, and Abraham from Lazarus. You remember also how the appearance of Samuel is spoken of, after his death.¹ And in that book of Holy Scripture in which the veil is drawn from the invisible world, the souls in Paradise are said to be seen. "I saw under the Altar the souls of them that were slain;—and white robes were given to every one of them."² Some blessed brilliant forms of light, it would seem from that passage, were *seen*.

It is true that the spirits and souls of the righteous are not yet perfected, because the entire

¹ 1 Sam. xxviii. 14.

² Rev. vi. 9, 11.

man is not yet glorified. Their state is imperfect ; it is one of expectancy. They are looking for the Resurrection of the body, through which perhaps they will come into contact with a much larger part of the material universe than they can do now. Yet even angels, who are "spirits," can become visible. The eyes of men, spiritually enlightened, have been enabled to discern the forms of Angels, seen in the likeness of humanity.

We may therefore think of those who have gone before us, as having consciousness about themselves and about each other ; as being able to recognise each other, and as having a condition of identity which some sort of blessed bright form will give them. Search the Scriptures, yourselves. Take every passage which discloses the individuality of those who have gone into the invisible world ; you will scarcely be able, it seems to me, to come to any other conclusion.

There will also be, amongst other marks of life and consciousness, Memory. You know what Abraham said to one : "Son, remember !" Look back upon thy life. Think of what you did with the means which GOD gave you. Think of those who were so close to you, at your very gate ; remember how you directed all your enjoyment to

self, instead of making GOD the centre of your life. "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things."¹ There will be, then, this great bond and link between one part of our life and another, which seems almost indispensable to our individuality and to our consciousness, the wonderful prerogative of Memory.

Together with this, there will be a *progress*, a growth ; in knowledge, and in holiness. S. Paul learnt in Paradise what he did not know before, here on earth ; and shall not we, my brethren, there learn the power and the meaning of truths to which we have not yet attained ? Shall not GOD reveal to us, in Paradise, the truths which some holy men clearly see already, but whereunto we ourselves cannot honestly say that we have attained ? "GOD shall reveal even this unto you."²

This progress in knowledge may be attained through what other spirits and souls may tell us ; or through what the Angels of GOD may bring to us ; or through what the HOLY SPIRIT Himself may declare unto us. In the Parable of the rich man and Lazarus, Abraham speaks of "Moses and

¹ S. Luke xvi. 25.

² Phil. iii. 15.

the Prophets,"—of the dispensation, unknown to him in the flesh, then going on upon earth, which began with the giving of the Law upon Mount Sinai. Abraham knew that upon earth they had "Moses and the Prophets," though Moses lived some centuries later, and the Prophets went on for a thousand years after his body was laid in the tomb at Hebron. He was conscious of the progress of the Kingdom of GOD upon earth ; he had heard and known of the new means and appliances which GOD had provided for bringing souls to Himself.

In the Kingdom of Light and Life, this progress in knowledge would imply progress in *holiness*. And, dear brethren, for progress in holiness, it is not necessary to assume a time of pain and agony. Souls may and will expand in the Paradise of GOD, in happiness and brightness, in light and refreshment. If only they pass thither with the true principle of life within themselves,—if only they have made GOD the centre of their life, on earth,—in whatever way He may have Himself determined for each of them, there will, we may be sure, be progress, "from glory to glory." If this transfiguration has been begun upon earth, it will not cease in Paradise. Looking upon the light of

GOD, and beholding the face of GOD, they will be changed "from glory to glory, even as by the SPIRIT of the LORD."¹ There will be no stagnation of life.

There is no necessity to assert the dogma of Purgatory. For we all know how, when God shows His mercies to us, the heart may "fear and be enlarged," under the consciousness of His fatherly blessing and His mighty love;²—how it may realise, even after forgiveness, the horror and pain of having ever put GOD to sorrow and to shame, without any actual loss of the consciousness of His favour and love, or of peace and rest in outward circumstances. You who have been forgiven, you who are at peace,—you know how, without pain—without, at least, "the sorrow of the world,"—you can go back to GOD with all true filial love, acknowledging your former life of ingratitude, and want of love, and carelessness. You need not, by so doing, lose your peace and your sense of fellowship with GOD, even here.³

So also in Paradise: we can scarcely conceive otherwise than that souls should realise, when there, what they might have been in this world, and

¹ 2 Cor. iii. 18.

² Is. lx. 5. Ps. cxxx. 3, 4. Ezek. xx. 43, 44.

³ 1 Tim. i. 15. 1 Cor. vi. 11.

what opportunities they have missed ; and how many sins possibly they may have set going, in a course to which there seems no end. Yet, being in the bosom of their GOD, having the forgiveness of their FATHER, having “come out of great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb,” they may yet have that Branch of Palm given unto them, where-with they shall come to keep “the Feast of Tabernacles,” in the Paradise of rest and refreshment from the heat and burthen of a sin-laden conscience, at the feet of their SAVIOUR and their KING.¹

So then, there will be progress ; in knowledge, and in holiness. There may be things to learn from those who have gone before us, possibly ; or from the Angels of GOD ; or perhaps from some more direct action of CHRIST, and from the HOLY SPIRIT. And there will be some means provided for keeping up our fellowship of life with Him, and growing in it :—some kind of Sacramental action, upon the soul that has been cleansed, will still proceed, in the nearer Presence of JESUS CHRIST ; for “to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of GOD.”²

¹ Lev. xxiii. 39-43. Zech. xiv. 16-19. Rev. vii. 9-17.

² Rev. ii. 7.

We find this further evidence of continuity of life ; there will be *interest in the life on earth*,—in the world which we have left. You cannot imagine one who has begun his eternal life, here, ceasing to care for all that has been so much to him in this portion of his life. For, remember, it is here, in this world, that we enter upon the great state of separation. The contrast always brought before us in the Gospels and Epistles, and above all, in the Book of Revelation, is not between this world and the next, —between this part of GOD's Church and Kingdom, and that part which we enter at death,—but between the Church and Kingdom of GOD, the Body of CHRIST, and that which is outside. The contrast is between our state as citizens of the Heavenly Jerusalem, and our natural state, as citizens of this world, wherein, if we remain, we are “aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the Covenants of promise.”¹ From the time when you receive the franchise of the Kingdom of Heaven, your life is to be one continuous life of eternal progress. CHRIST is come that you may have “life,” here on earth, and that you may have it “more abundantly.”²

Surely, then, the true “life”—the life of love, of

¹ Eph. ii. 12.

² S. John x. 10.

interest and of sympathy—will be continued. Can we doubt it? Our LORD hath told us that even outside His Kingdom, there is remembrance of friends and of brethren ; as shewn in that petition of the rich man, that Abraham would send Lazarus to his “father’s house : for I have five brethren,” he said ; “that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.” Shall not we, then, carry upon our hearts, before the Throne of GOD, the thoughts of our former work and friends and sympathies, so far as GOD has cleansed and purified them, and brought them into His own Kingdom, making every thought, every imagination, obedient to JESUS CHRIST ?

You will see this, again, in the Book of Revelation. There is an interest, so to speak, in the fortunes of GOD’s Church ; there is some consciousness of the manner in which the Church of GOD is conducting herself, here upon earth. “ How long, O LORD, how long ? ”—is the cry of the souls under the Altar.¹ And again, when a time of trouble and calamity has overtaken the dwellers upon earth, the judgments of GOD are made manifest to the Saints in light.² When “ Babylon the Great ” falls, immediately there are great voices heard in

¹ Rev. vi. 9, 20.

² Rev. xv. 2-4.

Heaven.¹ And when “the kingdoms of this world shall have become the kingdoms of our LORD and of His CHRIST,”—when the last of the elect shall have been gathered in,—then, from all the dwellers in Paradise will arise the anthem of praise and thanksgiving.²

And so, there is *Hope* and *Expectancy*. There is expectancy of the Coming of JESUS CHRIST ; of the realisation of the fulness of the Kingdom of GOD. The whole Bride of CHRIST, whether on earth or in Paradise, cries, “Come quickly ; even so, come, LORD JESUS.”³ And the song which is put into the lips, so to speak, of the Blessed is this : “We shall reign on the earth.”⁴ There is something, then, to which they are still looking forward. Although they are, in some real way, already reigning with CHRIST, although they are among those that have already “overcome,”—some, by their prayers,—some, by their patience,—some, by their wistful longing that the Will of the LORD may be done,—yet, there is still a Kingdom to be given to the Saints ; the strain in which they all join is this : “We shall reign on the earth !”

And, as this expectancy and this hope burst

¹ Rev. xviii. 2, 20 ; xix. 1-5.

² Rev. xi. 15-18.

³ Rev. xxii. 20.

⁴ Rev. v. 10.

forth into vocal longing, so there is praise and thanksgiving and intercession, in the life of those who live behind the Veil.

But here, certain *difficulties* may occur to our minds.

1. The question may be asked: How can you account for the enjoyment of so spiritual a life? How can you imagine that there will come to the soul that is now so imperfect,—though, as we hope, really on GOD's side, and one of His elect,—the enjoyment of this highly-wrought spiritual life, which seems to form the portion of the Blessed in Paradise?

Dear brethren, GOD knows how to foster the young in faith,—the little children; in His own House, He may have arrangements for them, ripening their capacity for that enjoyment, for which we all feel our unfitness and incapacity, here. In the light and rest of His Paradise, they may have a time of discipline and training, for some thousand years or so, before JESUS CHRIST comes. We may surely leave this difficulty to GOD. They are safe in His holy keeping, and He knows how to lead them on to perfection; it is His Will that their whole spirit and soul and body should be

presented faultless, in the Day of the LORD's Appearing.

2. Then there is another difficulty,—and we must confess that it is a very grave and serious one:—the consciousness, in Paradise, that there are—perhaps not far away—other souls who are *not* happy; that there is, on the other side of what our LORD calls the “great gulf,” the wail of the impenitent, of those who have looked GOD in the face and have rejected Him. “How then,” it is asked, “can there be happiness, in Paradise? How could Abraham be happy there? How could Lazarus rest in Abraham’s bosom, in the presence of this great fact,—to which we dare not close our eyes, which it would be cowardly to ignore;—the consciousness of another world, where there is no progress, no peace, no light, no joy, no Presence of GOD?”

Dear brethren, first of all let me say, that it is not for those who are Epicureans in this world, to bring forward such objections. And in answer to arguments found in books of mere speculation, we can only speak *generally*.

But to others, we would say this. Here you are, in GOD’s world: you enjoy GOD’s sunshine, you enjoy society, you enjoy your meals, you can

sit down to your dinner comfortably. And yet, you know that any of the Clergy could take you to dens of horror, to scenes of suffering and of sin,—not very far off! Can you really be a good man,—knowing this, and yet able to enjoy life? Yes: and yet the facts are there; and the mystery cannot be explained. We cannot explain how a “Father” can leave His children in such sorrow and such crime. We cannot explain how His loving and compassionate Heart can allow the evil and misery which exist in this very city, to continue; we only know that it cannot be for want of Love; for “GOD is LOVE.” And so is it, with this difficulty of yours; about it, we must be content, as yet, to say with S. Paul: “Now, we see through a glass, darkly; now, I know in part.”¹ We cannot, as yet, explain the ways of GOD. But this we do know: the song that reaches us from Paradise is inspired by such a realisation of GOD’s Holiness and Love, that it can raise the strain, “Just and true are Thy ways, thou King of Saints.”²

This difficulty then, brethren, we allow to some extent; but we may lovingly commit it to our GOD, together with the difficulties around us of

¹ I Cor. xiii. 12.

² Rev. xv. 3.

this present life, wherein they exist in precisely the same relation to ourselves. We cannot explain GOD's ways; yet GOD may reveal even this unto us, hereafter.

3. One thought more. It may be said: "If we are to realise so intensely the future life into which we are passing, how shall we maintain our interest in this life? Will not the realisation of *that* world take away all the energy and spirit which we have, for work here?"

No, my brethren, quite the contrary. A true idea of the life to come will give a fresh interest to "the life that now is."

For instance, as to the *friends* that we meet here:—what interest does it give to the few moments in which the children of GOD are thrown together, when we recollect that we may meet each other, and recognise each other, in the world to come! We may be with them only for a day, but we may be beginning an acquaintance that is to last for ever.

Or again, as to the employment of our wealth—of all our talents—in the various *works* that GOD gives us to do:—may we not be beginning, here upon earth, the "works" which are to "follow" us, —the undertakings for the Kingdom of GOD, in

which we shall continue an interest hereafter? So deal with your earthly wealth, our LORD says, "that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."

The same principle holds good, with respect to such pursuits as Art and Science. When men are just beginning to see into the great intricacies of GOD's world,—when they are beginning to understand a little what Art and Science really mean,—we see them, time after time, hurried away, and their life apparently broken short. And yet, surely, it is not so; surely the fundamental laws of Science and Art—the laws of harmony, for instance, with regard to music—may be understood, in a deeper measure, hereafter. May not the man of science—may not the artist—be allowed to see, hereafter, the great principles upon which Art and Science rest, so as to enter into them, and even practise them, yet more thoroughly and perfectly? In all the "secular" employments and tastes of our life, if they be healthy and pure, there may be—nay, without a doubt there will be, in very truth, a continuity.

So far, then, from taking away our interest in this present life, we find that the realisation of "the life of the world to come" gives to everything

with which we have to deal in this life, a more true and living interest.

In conclusion, let us ask ourselves what are our practical duties with regard to those who are taken away from us,—those who are “fallen asleep in CHRIST.”

First of all let me say, dear brethren, that we must surely learn to speak of them *naturally*. Their names are not to be banished from our homes; we need not keep a fearful or moody silence about them. We may teach our little ones, if a sister has been taken from them, to thank GOD that one whom they love is in Paradise. Our own children may be taught to feel how blessed it is to have this link with the unseen world. What strength it may give to our life, to have those whom we have known and loved, behind the Veil!

And next, we ought to read—perhaps more carefully than we do—the biographies of those who have already fought the battle of life, in order to bring before our minds their early career, and see how they were “men of like passions” as ourselves, and had to deal with this world and its tribulations, as we likewise have to do,—how they fought, and how they conquered.

Taking those three great pictures that are given to us in the Book of the Revelation, of the life of the Departed, in Paradise,—that in the 6th chapter, where they are heard crying, “How long, O LORD,” and joining with the prayers and intercessions of the Church on earth,—that in the 7th chapter, where they are seen coming “out of great tribulation ;” and that in the 14th chapter, where they seem to sound a note of triumph, standing upon the mount of exaltation with our LORD and His other blessed and redeemed ones—let us try to realise their present life,—a life of peace and rest, of continued prayer and worship, of joyous thanksgiving, and of triumphant praise.

And then, let us remember that they are around us now, in a true and real way. As our fellow-countrymen in India, fighting our battles,¹ may be urged on to valour and energy by the consciousness of our interest and our sympathy, so are we reminded of the great “cloud of witnesses” round about us, as a motive, an incitement, to deal practically with our besetting sins, and with all hindrances in the heavenly race. “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and

¹ The Afghan War was then going on.

the sin which doth so easily beset us,—looking unto JESUS ;”¹ not looking to the Saints for help, not lifting up our hands to them ; not employing invocations, for which we have no authority ; but, conscious of their interest and of their sympathy, let us look where they are pointing,—“ unto JESUS.” Remembering the presence of these unseen witnesses, and conscious of their knowledge in some way of what is taking place here below,—although we have no assurance that they could even hear us, if we tried to speak to them,—we have to “ run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto JESUS,” their LORD and our LORD : “ looking unto JESUS, the Author and Finisher of our faith,” Who begins our life of faith in this world, and completes it in His Paradise.

“ For GOD hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our LORD JESUS CHRIST, Who died for us, that whether we sleep or wake, we should live together with Him,” Who is the “Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending,” the “Author and Finisher,” of the Christian life.

¹ Heb. xii. 1, 2.

SERMON II.

THE LIFE OF THE BLESSED, AFTER THE RESURRECTION.

“Now they desire a better country, that is, an Heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their GOD: for He hath prepared for them a City.”—HEB. xi. 16.

IN speaking to you of our future life, I purpose to address myself to a sentiment which, I am sure, widely prevails, and which in a great measure hinders the earnestness and joy of Christian life.

This feeling might, I think, be expressed in this sort of way:—“The Heaven of which you speak in the pulpit,—the Heaven which Scripture seems to describe, and which is set forth in the Book of the Revelation of S. John, may be very beautiful for Saints and Angels, and beings of that kind; it is a very spiritual life, I know,—but it is far above my capacity to understand or to enjoy: I cannot honestly say that for me it has very much

attraction. If you would only leave me here, on this earth,—and GOD has created it, GOD rules it, GOD is present, here,—if you could remove one or two hindrances to reasonable—and I would add religious—enjoyment ;—if there were not quite so much crime, and selfishness, and strife ;—if there were no death, no curse, no separation,—this earth would be to me a Heaven. The Heaven of the Bible—the Heaven of preachers—is no doubt full of glory ; but that glory is not such as the education of earth helps me to appreciate. There is within me a noble ambition, a power of energy, a capacity of joy ; but your Heaven does not satisfy it. Your Heaven is not *human* ; that is the fault I find with it. It may be very spiritual, very bright, very beautiful, but it is not human,—it is not natural : and I cannot honestly say that I ‘desire a better country’ with all my heart and soul.”

“And then,” such an one would further ask, “what is the meaning of all our training here upon earth ? Why are we to be trained in political life, in social life, in domestic life, in the life of Art and Science, if, after these tastes have been formed and developed, and manifested, to a certain extent, they are to be cut off ? To what end does all that

training lead, if all is concluded by death,—if we thereby pass into an entirely different sphere, where we shall want none of those faculties, and can exercise none of those tastes, which were developed here upon earth? And moreover, it is hard to see what scope there would be, in the Heaven you describe, even for some of the virtues, such as faith, and courage, and stedfastness, and hope; for all that goes to make up true manliness and greatness of life upon earth."

This is what seems to be, brethren, a widely prevailing sentiment; and unless we meet it, it is very likely to do harm, coming out in very dangerous shapes.

Now it seems to me that, as the true Scriptural doctrine of the life after death, *before* the Resurrection, is the safeguard and the remedy against worldliness, so the true Scriptural doctrine about Heaven, the life *after* the Resurrection, will be the great safeguard against Socialism, against tendencies to Materialism and Scepticism and Communism, and great political revolutions.

For the spirit which distinguishes these tendencies is this. Their promoters say to the literary, luxurious Sceptic and Rationalist, their teachers in unbelief: "It is all very well for you,



sitting in your study, and enjoying literature and the refinements of life, to take away our Heaven,—to give us the Creed of the Materialist,—to break away the foundation of our hope in a future life: we accept your Materialism, your Rationalism: but then, *you have taken away our Heaven!* We are born for a Heaven: we have not got Heaven upon earth;—many of us live a life of toil and of hard discipline, and we see others enjoying this earth. If there had been a life beyond, for which we are being trained, we could possess our souls in patience, while believing that we are to have the good things by and bye:—*so*, we could understand the meaning of life. But you have taken away our Heaven,—so far, at least, as its existence for us upon earth is concerned: you speak of a better state of things upon earth, for which we are to labour, after we are dead and gone! But why are we not to have our Heaven upon earth,—or at least a fair share of it? We have the power to get it;—at any rate, we have the brute force to conquer it for ourselves;—and we mean to have it!"

That, brethren, is the meaning of the Socialism which comes out in such prodigious and startling phenomena around us.

Now, the true safeguard against all this, is, not a mere preaching of Heaven on the part of the educated—of those to whom GOD has given greater wealth, and greater responsibilities. Believe me, people will soon find out whether you give out a doctrine, so to speak, as an element of “the Police force,”—to keep people quiet,—or whether you *live in the faith and hope of it, yourself*;—a faith and hope based on the true Scriptural doctrine of the life of Heaven, as a life of continuity with all that is true and pure and noble, in this present life.

That idea of the future life is a *mistake*, which makes it seem unreal, unnatural, non-human: such an idea, I mean, as some Christian philosophers indulge in; for instance, the author of “Rocks ahead,” and of “Enigmas of Life,” for whom one cannot fail to have a great respect, on account of his earnestness, and utter absence of flippancy and presumption. Their objections clearly arise from a misunderstanding of the Christian view of the Future Life.

For the Bible does not merely answer the question, “What must I do to be saved?” It gives us disclosures of what that world—that Kingdom—is, into which the salvation of JESUS CHRIST brings us. The Bible is written, to give

us a delineation of a larger world than this. It unveils that world to our view. It discloses to us the existence and the ministry of Angels ; and men with calm, reasoning, reflective minds, have found strength and support in meditating upon that great doctrine of the existence and the ministry of Angels. You may remember that when our great English divine, Hooker, lay dying, and was visited by his friend, just before his eyes were closed upon this world, he seemed in such deep contemplation that his friend asked him what he was thinking about ; and he answered that he was meditating upon “the number and the nature of the Angels, and on their blessed obedience and order, without which, peace could not be in Heaven ;” adding : “O that it might be so, upon earth ! ”¹

And, whether we will or no, at least when a mother loses her daughter, when a husband stands over the grave of his wife, questionings about the other world will arise ; and if they are not met with a right answer, there is a temptation to adopt straightway an erroneous one ; a partial, or a distorted, or a perverted account of it, such as that of “Purgatory,” flames of purification by means of

¹ Hooker’s Works. Ed. Keble. Life, p. 85.

suffering, into which it is supposed that our loved ones pass, after death ; or the materialist view, of a sleep out of which there is no waking, and which is meanwhile unconsciousness.

But, brethren, the heart needs stronger food than is given by these rough and ready views, into which, without searching into the Scriptures, people fall, taking just enough of the true doctrine to put others off their guard. Our Blessed LORD said, on one occasion, to those who were enquiring about a future life, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures :" your Scriptures speak about Abraham and Isaac and Jacob being *alive*, because GOD is "the GOD of Abraham, the GOD of Isaac, and the GOD of Jacob," and He is not the "GOD of the dead, but of the living." And if He be indeed "the GOD of the living,"—and if man was not made originally upon a mistaken plan, when he was made with *body*, soul, and spirit,—then it follows, that there must be a general Resurrection. The doctrine of the Resurrection, according to our LORD, is contained in the words of GOD, "I am the GOD of Abraham, the GOD of Isaac, and the GOD of Jacob."¹

It was a sense of this truth, dear brethren, which found its expression when those hymns, which she

¹ S. Matt. xxii. 29-32.

loved so well, were so lately sung over the grave of the beloved wife of our revered Primate:—

“Let saints on earth in concert sing,” &c.,

and

“Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,” &c.

Here is the answer of GOD to these questionings of the human heart,—an assurance from Him with regard to that City, that Home, that Country, for which this life is a reasonable education and training.

And now, brethren, let us see what Holy Scripture tells us—what the HOLY SPIRIT tells us, as to the elements of the life of Heaven.

I. It is a life passed WITH JESUS CHRIST. This, in itself, is an answer to the question, “Will it be a *human* life,—a *natural* life?” For what is the centre of the life of the City of GOD? “The Throne of GOD and of the Lamb.” And Who is “the Lamb,” but the Everlasting SON of Mary, Whom Stephen beheld, “standing on the Right Hand of GOD?” Therefore it is round about a Human Personality,—round about One Who has “Flesh and Bones,” as His disciples saw that JESUS had, that “the life of the world to come” groups itself.

Of course, if that world is to be enjoyed, there must be what we call “conversion.” The soul must be turned round, from self to Christ; we must be at least *beginning* to make Him the centre of our life. For to live in Heaven is to pass Eternity “with CHRIST,” under Whose loving rule all things truly human, as well as all things that are Divine, shall flourish and abound. For ever since His reign on earth has begun, though not as yet thoroughly acknowledged everywhere, civilisation has progressed, with its learning, its freedom, its order, its political life, its arts and sciences, its security and joy and brightness and vigour. In short, what has created the civilised world, but the rule of CHRIST the King? And when CHRIST the King rules without let or hindrance, not only “the earth may be glad thereof, yea, the multitude of the isles may be glad thereof,”¹ but He will be a Human Centre as well as a Divine Power; a Human as well as a Divine LORD.

And when we see Him, brethren, surely we shall see the Incarnation of all that we admire upon earth! Will He not be the Embodiment—the realised Ideal—of courage, of purity, of love, of gentleness, of knowledge, of intellectual power,—of

¹ Ps. xcvi. 1.

all that is beautiful and fair? Is He not, already, the Light of this world, as well as of the City of GOD?¹ For what is more beautiful, here on earth, than the character impressed with the seal of JESUS CHRIST,²—whether it be in the little child, or in the grown-up man or woman, or in the “ancient men?” What is it that gives a glory to any personal character among us now, but some trait or other of the Character of our LORD,—some ray or other caught from the glory round His Head?

But you see at once, that unless we have learnt, here, in some degree, to love JESUS CHRIST, Heaven can be no Heaven to us. Nay, rather, it would be Hell, to be condemned to spend Eternity—not merely thirty or forty years, but Eternity—with a Person Whom we did not love or care for;—of Whom we should say, when we had seen Him, “there is no beauty that we should desire Him.”³ If we could not get away from the presence of One Whom we could not love, or even worship, then Heaven would be no Heaven, for us! This, in itself, would constitute exclusion from the City of GOD; not the having done so many things that

¹ S. John viii. 12; ix. 5. Rev. xxi. 23.

² Zech. ix. 17.

³ Is. liii. 2.

were wrong, but the not *being*, ourselves, what we must be, if we are to enjoy the society, the rule, the governance of JESUS CHRIST. So then, Heaven is, first of all, to be with JESUS CHRIST. "Where I am, there shall also My servant be."¹

II. Heaven is THE BEATIFIC VISION—the sight of GOD. This is another constituent element of the life of the City of GOD: one which is a difficulty with many people; leading some, perhaps, to that erroneous impression of which I spoke at first,—that Heaven is not suited to human nature and human capacity. For this, brethren, is a state which Humanity, as it is here, could not possibly enjoy; the sight of the Blessed TRINITY will require a purified vision.

But then, is there not testimony of our need of this, here upon earth? Do not people spend money, time, and trouble, to see the great sights of earth,—mighty mountains, and great waterfalls, and smiling valleys? And what are the Alps, crowned with snow, reddened by the sunrise, but a *thought* of GOD,—an embodied thought of GOD, a witness unto us, that GOD is there? That sight is what it is, because GOD is what HE is. The

¹ S. John xii. 26.

sunshine of earth which makes us glad, the drops of rain which make the corn-fields to "laugh and sing,"¹—all that makes Nature bright and beautiful and home-like to us, is what it is, because GOD is what HE is. Man feels his deepest joy and gladness, in the sensation of awe.² He goes to the Alps, or to lands unknown to him, because he craves for the sensation of awe, of overshadowing majesty, which the creature requires, to stand in the Presence of the Creator. That feeling of awe, of delight in awe,—a solemn and reasonable awe,—shall find its perfect fulfilment in the Vision of GOD.

Our very vices testify to Man's need of this ecstasy, and this rapture. For what is it that confirms the drunkard in his debasing sin? Not that he likes the taste of what he drinks, but that the spirit, the opium, the stimulant, or whatever it be, carries him into a condition of ecstasy and rapture. So also does an ambition perverted, a degraded ambition, testify to the fact that Man is born for glory,—born to be a king, born to rule, to have dominion over the earth and all that is in it,—aye, and to sit with CHRIST upon His Heavenly

¹ Ps. lxv. 13.

² See Mozley's University Sermons, 1876, "On Nature," p. 131.

Throne, even as He overcame and is set down with His Father in His Throne. Our very vices are a witness against ourselves, that “our hearts are restless, until they rest in Him;” that they cannot be satisfied, until they “see GOD.”

Thus the Vision of GOD is, so to speak, the development of what, in the germ, we find in ourselves, here.

III. WORSHIP is a great part of the life of Heaven. Is this “un-natural?” People say that they cannot accept worship as a state of existence, except for those who are content to spend their lives in church, and Sunday employments, and singing hymns; “whereas we,” they say, “who have intellects and wills and affections, cannot possibly enter into and understand the *joy* of that life of endless worship, round about the Throne.”

But when is it that men feel life more abounding in them than at any other time? Is it not in the consciousness of a multitude round about them, thrilled with one sensation, having one end and object? The soldiers in an army,—aye, and even a tumultuous mob,—are instances of this. What must it be, then, to be one in a congregation, with thousands and tens of thousands around us, swelling

the chorus, and lifting up the strains of joy and thanksgiving? People are not, in a crowd, what they are individually; a sympathetic touch, or rather an electric power, goes through them; they are carried out of themselves, and express their fullest life, when forming part of a multitude moved by one spirit and one feeling.

And if you consider, you will see how worship requires the service of the soul,—of the affections and the will,—and even of the body. If you keep the body in a sluggish or sensual state, you cannot possibly, even physically, understand what worship is. Worship is, for the creature, the highest expression of life,—that which distinguishes him from the brute beast which crops the grass beneath his feet, and cannot look up to the GOD Who made it. Man is a creature born for worship, made for correspondence with his GOD; he is able to embrace GOD, to see great things in GOD; able, in worship, to stir up his highest feelings, and to bring before the footstool of GOD all things which GOD has created. “Thou art worthy, O LORD, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are, and were created.”¹ While he dwells upon

¹ Rev. iv. 11.

the attributes of the Eternal, he learns to rejoice in GOD, and to call Him *his* GOD. For worship ever appropriates GOD, and cries, “Salvation to *our* GOD!”¹ He is ours, through the glorious union and correspondence of worship; in worshipping GOD, Man rejoices that *his* GOD is Holy, and Great, and Almighty, and Eternal.²

IV. HEAVEN IS A CITY. This aspect of the life of Heaven is, perhaps, more than any other, an answer to the difficulty which we have been considering, as to the “un-humanness” of Heaven. The life of the Blessed, before the Resurrection, is described to us under the image of a Garden—a place of Rest—Abraham’s bosom—the Paradise of GOD—where the LAMB shall lead His own “beside the still waters,” and “wipe away all tears from their eyes.”³ But the symbol and figure under which the life of Heaven is set before us is that of a “City.” The life of the Blessed, after the Resurrection, is represented as the abounding life—the energetic life—of a “City.”⁴

This City, God has “prepared:”—not for

¹ Rev. vii. 9, 10; xix. 1, 5.

² Ps. xcvi. 6, 7; xcix. 3, 5, 9; lxxvii. 13, 14; xlvi. 1, 14.

³ Rev. ii. 7; vii. 17; xiv. 13.

⁴ Rev. xxi. 2, 10.

Angels or other such beings, whose life we cannot be supposed to understand, but for those who have been "pilgrims and strangers on the earth :" for Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and all who in after ages have travelled through the experience of this world, and have been trained by it for "a better country ;" for all who have gained experience —other than the experience of sin—in this earthly life ; in an earthly house, an earthly city, an earthly country. For all such experience has its meaning : all is to have its full and free sphere of manifestation hereafter, in the City of our GOD.

Better even than Ur of the Chaldees, where was all that life could shew of Civilisation and Art¹ in ancient days, was to be that "better country," to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. And in all after ages, it is because earthly life has served its true purpose with the children of GOD,—because it has awakened longings reaching upwards,—because it has given play to true tendencies, and exercised capacities, hereafter to be fully developed,—it is because earth has *trained* them, but not *satisfied* them, that "GOD is not ashamed to be called their GOD,"—as He would have been, if they were

¹ Is. xiii. 19.

simply of the earth, earthly,—if they still clung to earth, after they had set out for Heaven ;—“ if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out.”¹

Therefore, “ GOD is not ashamed to be called their GOD ;” for them, GOD hath prepared a City :—for them who, while they hated not this world, yet sat loose to it. GOD, Who prepared this earth for us, with its manifold “ riches,”² and with its wealth of human life,—GOD, who understand us so well that He gave us so beautiful a home, here on earth,—this GOD hath prepared for us also “ a better country,”—“ a City,” wherein we shall find all—and more than all—that an earthly city gives, —only, without the sin, and without the death ; “ a City,” with its interchange of gifts, the “ wealth of the nations ;”³ “ a City,” in the citizens of which shall be manifested what varied possibilities—what grand capacities of human nature—are wrapped up in even one little child !

I cannot dwell further, dear brethren, upon all this ; I must draw to a close. But first, let me answer two difficulties, very briefly.

¹ Heb. xi. 8-10, 13-16.

² Ps. civ. 24.

³ Is. lx. 5. Rev. xxi. 26.

1. Is there not to be the joy of *living for others*, of *working for others*, in Heaven? Does not this constitute, for the unselfish, the highest joy of human life, here on earth?

When we think of the heavenly Jerusalem as the capital of the Great King, where He gathers together His elect, His perfected, His glorified, it seems to imply that there are other cities,—that Jerusalem is the capital of a vast realm. We are told of “kings” who “bring their glory and honour into it;” of “nations” which “shall walk”—not in it, but—“in the light of it.”¹ And “in the midst of the street of it,” there is also the “Tree of Life,” the leaves of which are “for the healing of the nations.” Surely, then, there will be the joy of ministering service, in Heaven.

And will there not be the responsibilities of Rule, there? If not, what does our Blessed LÓRD—Who cannot deceive—mean, when He speaks of having “authority over ten cities,” or “over five cities,” because we have been “faithful in a very little,” and of entering “into the joy” of our ruling LÓRD?² Surely, in this we see, that there will be administrators and ministrations; there will be a ministry,

¹ Rev. xxi. 24; xxii. 2.

² S. Matt. xxv. 21. S. Luke xix. 17.

with responsibilities and duties ; there will be services to be done for others.

Moreover, there will be progressive developments. There will not be stagnation, but growth ; we shall be perfect, yet ever going on unto a perfection which we can never fully attain, even that of the ALL-PERFECT GOD, who shall give us ever more and more of His Grace and of His Love. "In the ages to come," the Apostle says, He means to "shew the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness toward us through CHRIST JESUS."¹

2. And is it a difficulty, that this life—which will be so glorious—will be so *public* ?

Though it be indeed public,—in "the light," yet there will also be a glorious privacy of light,—an ineffable communication between the SAVIOUR and the soul. For though He speaks of the "many mansions," He tells us also of the "hidden manna," and of "the new name" that "no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."² Therefore, we can hope,—nay, we can be sure,—that all we need will be provided, of the life "hid with CHRIST in GOD,"³ while there will also be that life of glory with the great multitude before the Throne

¹ Eph. ii. 7.

² S. John xiv. 2.

Rev. ii. 17.

³ Col. iii. 3.

of GOD. All that our Humanity needs, it shall find, in that Divinely-prepared Home and City and Country.

We see some foreshadowing of these truths, in the training of GOD's Church, here upon earth. For whatever those symbols mean that describe the City of GOD, lying "four-square," with those "twelve foundations," and those "twelve gates,"—with "the hundred and forty and four thousand of them which were sealed,"—whatever these figures mean, they mean this at least, that the life of Heaven is a life of Order, a life of Law.

In the law and order of GOD's Apostolic Church on Earth, we are being trained for that order round about the Throne of GOD; we are being trained to take our place there, by the order, here upon earth, of that Church whose law, as Hooker says,¹ "has her seat in the Bosom of GOD," whose voice is "the harmony of the world."

In Providence,—in all the duties, the privations, the sufferings, the joys, of this life,—GOD trains us for the appreciation of Himself in the next.

And in Nature, He trains us for the vision of Himself. Even in the visible Creation around us,

¹ E. P. book i. ch. xvi. 8.

we can trace those thoughts which will find their perfection hereafter, in the vision of GOD.

“ How wonderful Creation is,
The work that Thou didst bless,
And oh ! what then must Thou be like,
Eternal Loveliness ! ”

But here, I must leave the subject. That for which all Creation prays,—that for which “the whole Creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together, even until now,”—is all summed up in the prayer of the Church, “ Even so, come, LORD JESUS ! ” Come, to crown the Earth, to crown Humanity ! Come, to perfect our Redemption, and to complete our Sanctification !

Perchance, dear brethren, it may be permitted to some of us, as we travel onward to that country, so to meditate upon these things, that we may a little better understand what we mean, when we say : “ I look for the Resurrection of the Dead, and the Life of the World to come.”

SERMON III.

THE ANGLICAN PRINCIPLE ESSENTIALLY HISTORICAL.

*Preached, in substance, at S. Peter's, Eaton Square,
on Sunday, May 19, 1878.¹*

“That good thing which was committed unto thee keep, by the HOLY GHOST which dwelleth in us.”—2 S. TIMOTHY i. 14.

“It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the Faith which was once delivered unto the Saints.”—S. JUDE 3.

I THINK, my brethren, that if we consider the matter, we should all be thankful to Almighty GOD that our lot is cast in this age, rather than in any previous period of the world’s history.

We have, of course, difficulties and temptations ; but the Church of GOD, until it is gathered around the Feet of CHRIST in glory, must, and will be, always militant ; and I do not know, my brethren, whether we should have been subject to less

¹ Also in S. Paul’s Cathedral, on Sunday evening, July 28, 1878.

contention of mind, if we had lived even in the days when the Son of Man was visibly present here upon Earth. Knowing how weak my own faith is, I am thankful that I have the support of all that GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT has given to us since the Ascension of our Blessed LORD, to hold us up in loyalty and love to Him.

It is an age which ought to call forth the enthusiasm and energy of all faithful Churchmen. There is so much to be done! And in this time particularly, when the questions of the day are, in a large measure, social questions, and when we have problems such, for example, as are suggested by the phenomenon of "Communism,"—every Churchman is called to do his part, in shewing forth the heavenly Society of the Church of GOD, as that perfect Society which will in the end answer all the cravings of the human heart, in which there is a desire for true and perfect social life.

One of the great blessings of the day is, that there is intense vitality and life all around us: this, in fact, partly accounts for the intellectual difficulties and doubts by which the faith of some is shaken. And it is also an age of great earnestness and reality, in contrast with the preceding

time of stagnation and affectation, when words were used with meanings not corresponding to the great realities which they properly signified. It is also an age of toleration, as we all know ; and we are bound to thank GOD heartily for it. There is liberty to every man, in one sense, to believe what he pleases, and to practise that form of religion which commends itself to his own mind.

But, my brethren, as we have these great blessings and advantages, we must also be prepared for some corresponding dangers. You cannot have great blessings and advantages, without also incurring some risk.

Now, then, if you will look at these three great blessings,—of vitality, and sincerity, and liberty, you will see that there is therewith a certain difficulty presented, in contending earnestly for the Faith which was once delivered unto the Saints.

(1) For if, as a matter of course, every man has a right to believe what he pleases, politically, and as a citizen of the world, there must be a temptation also to suppose, that it does not signify what he believes in matters of religion, so long as he is sincere in his faith.

(2) This also arises from the fact that the age is a real and practical one. Whatever our religious

opinions, we can combine together for many purposes, through which the world around us can be made happier and better; and where we have this great point of union, we are content,—rightly, and with great advantage, sometimes,—to sink our differences. And hence, what men are urged to do, is—to live for the practical advantage of their fellow-men, and to “leave theology alone.”

Now, it is true that we gladly say, with S. Paul, of the sincere man, “To his own master he standeth or falleth :”¹ we do not “judge them that are without ;”² they will be submitted to the all-merciful judgment and consideration of Almighty GOD. But to adopt as an axiom the saying that “so long as a man is sincere, it does not matter what he believes,”—that GOD will surely approve,—this is as much as saying that there is no revelation of the Truth from GOD, and that “a man is not responsible for his belief,” while the Holy Scriptures declare that he *is* responsible.

(3) This result of the general spirit of toleration, in our own mind, may ensue also from the fact that we have most of us, I suppose, friends near and dear, who think and believe, in religious matters, differently from ourselves; and when we meet

¹ Rom. xiv. 4.

² 1 Cor. v. 12.

around the family board, or in social gatherings, it is a matter of good taste not to allude to those points, however fundamental they may be, concerning the soul's salvation, and the Truth of GOD, in which we differ from them. And so, agreeing not to talk of those matters, they do, to a certain extent, vanish from our minds, and sink into vagueness and indefiniteness, because they do not constitute a bond of fellowship.

Moreover, as you know, we live in a time when Christendom is very greatly divided. In our own country alone, there are, it is said, over and above 150 religious communities, who have different views, even though they be all Christian, of what is the Faith "which was once delivered to the Saints." And so the practical layman is often tempted to say, "I will either adopt a Faith for myself, or else I will throw myself into good works of practical advantage in this present world, so as to make this life, at least for others, for the sorrowful and the sad, a life in which they can find a happier home, and a truer rest: and I will trust GOD for my future." And he will say sometimes to us: "You are all at variance among yourselves; so many of you religious and Christian men doubt even what this Faith really is; how then can you

expect me to be very earnest in contending for it, or even in accepting it?"

How then, my brethren, is the practical Churchman to be *sure*, about the Faith which was "once delivered unto the saints?"

It is not so much a matter of difficulty, and doubt, and mist, and darkness, as we may be tempted to suppose. Nor is every Churchman bound to go into the grounds of his Faith. The Prayer-book, by which the Bible is interpreted, is put into our hands, and is the bond of union between the various continents of the world, where the Anglican Church has to-day been offering up the same Prayers and Collects, and singing the same Psalms; whether far away in some strange land, where the exile finds it difficult to sing "the songs of Zion," or here, where such a heart-inspiring Service as this has been lifted up before the Throne of GOD.

But—without ranging before us, and passing in review, the various religious bodies in the world, and in our own land, which claim to set forth this Faith, once delivered to the Saints, in all its integrity and purity and vitality—let us see whether we cannot order and measure these various opinions by certain principles.

It seems to me, that there are *three great principles*, by which Christian communities can be measured and studied. Therefore, I say,—without examining or judging their several opinions,—we will shortly consider what these three principles are, on which communities act in religious matters. Though obliged to use certain technical terms, we need not deal with the matter controversially; we will simply note what these principles are in themselves, and consider whether they are logical and reasonable, and according to the Mind of GOD, as revealed by the HOLY SPIRIT in the Scriptures. We are obliged to use some names, however, for the sake of distinction: and therefore we will call them the Ultra-Protestant principle, the Ultramontane principle, and the Anglican or Historical principle.

I. The *Ultra-Protestant* principle, which adopts as its motto the saying,—with which we, of course, agree in a measure,—that “the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants.”

“The Bible, and the Bible only,” is, in a very true sense, the religion of all Churchmen; and moreover, if you will allow me to say so, I think our churchmanship would be much stronger, and clearer, and brighter, and more loving, if we knew and studied the Bible better than we do. Some of

our greatest Saints have been men of one book only,—and that book, the Bible. S. Augustine and S. Basil, and S. Thomas à Kempis, and writers of much devout literature, and of those standard books, from which others, at second-hand, have drawn the pure water of the River of Life ;—these men, these great Catholic Saints, were men of “the Bible, and the Bible only.” But they studied the Bible within “the Church of the living GOD,” which is the “pillar and ground of the Truth.”¹ It is clear also, that our Church sends us to the Bible, as the one source of all that we are to deliver and to teach on authority.

Therefore, so far as it goes, this is a great and sound principle ; but, practically adopted, it is clearly not a sufficient principle for bringing men into unity,—for setting forth the Faith in the distinctness with which it was “once delivered unto the Saints.” Men are often very much better than their principles ; and many who take this principle as their sole rule of faith are really at one with us. But, under this principle, we see many varying religious creeds founded, such as even that of the Socinian, and that of the Baptist, and that of the Quaker, and that of the Independent, and others

¹ 1 S. Tim. iii. 15.

of whom, to say nothing of their opinions, this at least is plain ; they are not agreed as to what this Faith is.

To go to the Holy Scriptures of GOD, as men sometimes are ready to do, in order to find out a religion for themselves, by that which they may call the "verifying faculty" in their own minds, leads them to the rejection of a great part of the Bible itself. That principle of "individualism" may cut out the Epistle of S. James, and the Epistle of S. Jude, and so straiten even the Bible, which is received upon the witness of the undivided Church.

II. And next, my brethren, to state the *Ultra-montane* principle quite fairly, with GOD's help, we find it to be this. Those who adopt it agree with us in saying that the Church is the shrine and sanctuary of GOD the HOLY GHOST, and the sphere of His operations ; and that there is one Body and one SPIRIT. But then, they go on to say that this Body, inspired by the HOLY SPIRIT, is called upon, at certain periods of the world's history,—when the Christian Church is ready for it, and when the world requires it,—to *reveal new dogmas of faith* ; and also that, while it is the office of the HOLY SPIRIT thus to declare fresh

utterances of the Truth of GOD, He does this *through one human visible head and mouth-piece*.

In these two assertions, they differ from us : asserting first, that the office of the HOLY SPIRIT is something more than to take the Faith once for all delivered to the Saints,—to take “the things of CHRIST,”—of CHRIST, so as He was once for all revealed, and make them clear to us ;—and secondly, that the HOLY SPIRIT, instead of witnessing through a College of Apostles, has but one earthly voice by which He can speak clearly, from time to time, to the world ; so that, instead of there being twelve foundation-stones of the heavenly Jerusalem, there is one rock upon which it is all built,—and that one, a human stone, instead of the Divine Rock of Ages. This principle implies, you will observe, that there may be something new to believe, a century hence, beyond that which we now believe, and which our forefathers believed, a century ago ; that we may be called upon to accept as a matter of salvation, that which was at least not understood, by those to whom S. Jude wrote, as the Faith for which they were earnestly to contend.

III. And now, to pass on to the principle of the Anglican Church, you ask : What is the authority

to which *we* refer, and what is the rule by which we are to determine what this Faith is?

If you ask what the authority is, to which the Church of England sends us, it is simply this, the one authority of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. He is the one great Authority. The Church has indeed an authoritative witness to bear; though, observe, authority is one thing, and witness another; much confusion comes from forgetting the distinction.

Then the question comes,—and this is the great question for us: “What has CHRIST revealed? What has CHRIST ordained and constituted? How are we to determine what is, and what is not, the Word and Will of CHRIST?” We answer: “By the witness of the Early Church,—of the Undivided Church,—of those who lived nearest to our LORD,—of those who had not lost any of the grace of spiritual insight, by division,—and who were, reasonably speaking, the most likely to know what the Mind of CHRIST was, and how the Holy Scriptures were to be understood.”

Observe, the Early Church is not, in the true sense, our “authority.” The authority to which we appeal is the LORD and KING, the Head of the Church, JESUS CHRIST. We believe Him to be GOD, before we go to the Bible; we believe Him

to be the SON of GOD, by the Resurrection from the dead, to which credible witnesses testify,—holy men, who, if they were to be examined before this congregation, would be believed as men of truth, when they would stand here and say, “We have seen JESUS CHRIST, since He died and was buried.” By the Resurrection, then, He is “declared to be the SON of GOD with power,” and He Himself is shewn to be “the Truth ;” and of Himself He says, “I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.”¹ Therefore, you go to CHRIST Himself, and ask what He has revealed, what He has ordained, what He has constituted.

And then, as a “witness” for the understanding of the Faith, you will look at the Church herself, as she comes from the Hand of CHRIST ; you will see how the Church lived,—watch how she worshipped,—observe how she was constituted, a hundred years after CHRIST.

Look, for a moment, at one point of constitution, and one point of doctrine :—you see Bishops everywhere, throughout the Church, governing their flocks ; and you see everywhere, as has been testified even by the Pagans, CHRIST worshipped as the SON OF GOD ; they “sang hymns unto CHRIST,

¹ Rom. i. 4. S. John ii. 19, 22 ; xiv. 6.

as to GOD." Everywhere,—without taking special passages and lines from the Fathers,—by what the Fathers said, by what they implied, by what all the early writers who spoke of the Christian Church alluded to,—and even by their silence, which is often eloquent,—you will see in what form and image the Church came from the Hand of CHRIST; what was her Creed, and what was her constitution.

And, my brethren, there is no very great mystery about the matter. It is not such a very dark and uncertain thing as some would have us believe. Look, for instance, at the Pastoral Epistles of S. Paul to Timothy and Titus, to whom he writes as having power to set in order things belonging to the Churches, and to ordain elders in every city; and you will see already laid, under the Apostle himself, the foundation of Episcopacy, as an institution "received of the LORD."¹

This Anglican principle is indeed at a disadvantage with the two former, in one respect. This is a day of impatience; people like to have a theory which they can, as it were, wrap up in a nutshell, and put into their pockets; whereas this "testimony of JESUS" requires "the *patience* of the Saints;" proofs converge, and the light comes from many

¹ 2 Tim. ii. 2. Titus i. 5.

sources. And moreover, we may quite allow that every question that can occur to the minds of even religious men has not been entirely settled. We may devoutly believe that the Providence of GOD arranges that some questions shall be left open,— that all avenues to some varieties of opinion shall not be closed.

Yet, on the whole, you will find the strains of the Nicene Creed sung, all along the ages, and that mystical and sacramental worship going on, in which those Bishops who have come together lately¹ have joined, one hundred of them communicating together, according to the rites of this great historical Church, with the charter of this historical principle ; the Prayer-Book in our hand, and the Bible devoutly studied, in the great temple of the Church of GOD.

In this great Anglican principle of Historical Continuity in the Faith, we find that we have a great principle of Rest. In these days, my brethren, men are restless. There is a general feeling of restlessness ; there has perhaps been even more in the past than, thank GOD, there is at this moment. Wherever you have looked, during these last two or three years,—to America, to Africa, to India, to the

¹ Referring to the “ Lambeth Conference.”

Continent of Europe, to our own islands,—everywhere you observe a general restlessness; what men yearn for, everywhere, is Rest.

And this principle of Rest is provided, in the great historical principle of our Church, wherein we have a Faith which was "once delivered to the Saints;"—a Faith which we heartily believe, and to which we testify, and which we are sure our children will live and die for, and, please GOD, "keep," by the power of the HOLY SPIRIT, until CHRIST comes again. All other principles may vary; you may have to change your position and your ground; you may be called upon to adopt certain things, which you did not hold some ten years ago. But here is a principle of restfulness, for the human mind; it gives us the motto "Semper eadem,"—"always the same,"—like the unchanging CHRIST, Who is "the Same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."¹

Yet, while He is an unchanging CHRIST, He is a living CHRIST; not a stereotyped, a rigid, an immovable CHRIST, but a CHRIST Who has sympathy with the spirit of the age, Who can speak to the nineteenth century in tones that will reach its heart, even as He has spoken to the ages which

¹ Heb. xiii. 8.

have gone before. We have, under this principle of our Church, an organisation developed, and a faith, and a love, which can adapt itself to the various circumstances of ages and of countries. In this principle is the great Centre from which the living Body moves, and up to which it gathers all the forces around, that it may grow up "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of CHRIST."¹ It is the Rest of *life*, not of stagnation.

And thus, while it is a principle of life and adaptation, it is also a great principle of liberty,—of breadth and comprehensiveness, which will save us from bigotry. Having *all* the Faith, "the Faith once delivered to the Saints," we can make full allowances for those who adopt this or that part of the sacred deposit,—seeing such beauty in it, that they are in love, as it were, with that part alone,—and who, in many cases, live such holy lives, that we see what a force and vigour there is, even in *one* sanctifying truth, taken by the HOLY SPIRIT to mould and fashion men. This principle will enable us to appreciate all holiness, wherever we find it, as the work of GOD the HOLY GHOST. And it will give us sympathy with *every part* of the Truth,

¹ Eph. iv. 13-16.

held in detached fragments by some hundred religious bodies around us. In this principle, then, is to be found the largest charity, and the most glorious liberty of the children of GOD.

Commending this principle, my brethren, to you, and having ventured thus to speak of it, when, once more, the Bishops of the Anglican Church separate, to bear witness in their own Dioceses, as they have borne witness here in London, to the Truth of GOD, we ask you to pray earnestly to GOD, that the HOLY SPIRIT may enable you in all earnestness to love it, and, "speaking the truth in love," valiantly to "contend for" it.

It may be brought up against this Conference of Bishops, that it has done comparatively nothing. In one sense, brethren, our business was just this, —to take care to do nothing, but to bear witness, by the fact of our coming together, and singing the Nicene Creed together, and taking part in the Blessed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of CHRIST, that the old Faith which enabled Saints to regenerate the world, in the first century, is all-sufficient to enable the Church to meet the nineteenth century, to grapple with its problems, to make it more heavenly, more Divine, and—more human. Let us, then, thank GOD that we have

been enabled, in this way, to bear witness for this our ancient and our living Faith.

And while we glory in it, my brethren,—while we glory in the principle of the Church into which GOD has called us,—let us also remind ourselves of this fact. However grand may be our heritage and our prerogative,—however much we may value our Creeds and our glorious Liturgies, and that ritual, so solemn and so dignified, which may make the service of the Anglican Church, throughout the world, the grandest and the most solemn in Christendom,—in spite of all these privileges, we may be paralysed in our hearts, and in the centre of our spiritual life, unless our Church shews by her energy, that she is true to her name of an Apostolic Church, having an Apostleship *to the whole world* ; that she is, therefore, a Missionary Church, an aggressive Church, and can send forth the power of this Truth, even to those who are at the ends of the earth.

Before we boast ourselves of our heritage, and speak—except in humiliation—of the great position to which GOD has called us, we must be more truly Apostolic than we have proved ourselves to be hitherto. Is there not a special call to our English nation, blessed by this great Church, to go

forward in that cause of Apostolic life and mission, with which CHRIST has charged us? Will not this country furnish some of the brave, and some of the true, to carry forth the standard of CHRIST's Kingdom,—to contend for the Faith which has inspired the hearts, and made strong the hands, of so many champions of CHRIST the LORD?

Let us pray, brethren, for the spirit of the Apostolic Faith, that we may indeed have, through the blessing of GOD, some cause to glory in our inheritance.

And now, praying that Almighty GOD may enable us all, wherever we may be, to "keep that good thing" which He has entrusted to us, we would beseech Him, on behalf of all who are young and impetuous, and who desire novelty, that GOD will indeed give them enthusiasm for this venerable Faith; venerable, yet so full of life and sympathy for all that is stirring in their hearts.

We beseech Him, also, that He will prevent those of middle age from becoming tired and weary with controversy, and giving up the Faith, as if it were a thing that could not rest upon a sure foundation, as science does, or could not be discovered, and so be tempted to take themselves to "the business of

life," and to the work of this world, leaving the Faith, somehow or other, to be ultimately lighted upon ;—that He will so make it to glow in their hearts, and live in their lives, that they may be strong in their affection, strong in their loyalty, to the Faith once for all delivered to the Saints.

And for every-one that is aged and growing in years, what better prayer can we offer, than that he shall be able to say, with such an one as the great Apostle, with "Paul the aged," as he comes to his last days, and looks forward to the land of brightness where he will still sing the old songs of praise, still join in the *Gloria*, and offer up the *Te Deum*, and still unite with all the Blessed in the eternal truths of the *Nicene Creed*,—"I have fought the good fight ; I have finished my course ; I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH ?"

THE END.



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